MYSORE

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BY

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TO

SIR MIRZA M. ISMAIL

DEWAN OF MYSORE

CONTENTS

Over a Mountain Range

FROM Arisikere the approach to Kadur is not very inspiring. Through the train window one sees mostly monotonous undulating fields, clusters of cactus, blunt rocks, odd boulders piled up anyhow, and fields covered with ashen, stunted scrub. It is rather disappointing because I have heard so much about the beauty of this district. The sandy, rocky undulations with their ruffian vegetation seem to me a very discouraging sample. But craning out of the window and looking towards the engine, I see far away blue outlines shimmering in the heat haze, but my sense of survey being poor it doesn't seem very convincing to me that I should be there in a few hours.

Outside the station at Kadur I take my seat in a bus, in gloomy resignation. It is a discoloured rattling vehicle with the look of a camel about to take on the last straw; hot passengers are pressed and packed in every seat; the oblique rays of the sun enter the bus and scorch our faces and hands; outside, the eyes can rest on only clusters of

uninteresting shops, a meaningless patch of ground with burnt grass on it, and a dilapidated bus office; the bus is always about to start but never really starts, only the bus conductor's shouting gathers volume and speed; it is not a moment very conducive to a cheerful outlook on life. I am one of the two privileged to sit beside the driver, the main recompense there being (if you don't mind your feet shrivelling up in the engine heat) that you needn't twist and fold up your legs but can stretch them, and look, not at the suffering faces of fellow-passengers but at the land in front of you.

The bus has not journeyed half an hour when I notice a change in the surroundings; in front stretches away a green shaded avenue with lawns on the sides; we are gradually passing into a jungle country. The road goes up and curves; the bus is climbing a gradient; the air cools, and the surroundings soften. Mound after mound of green thicket, bamboo clusters as far as the eye can see. What a haven for a big game lover! I casually drop an enquiry, vaguely recollecting a notice 'Caught in Kadur Forests' over a tiger cage in the Mysore Zoo. "Plenty of them," my neighbour assures me. "You can see them

on the roadside if you come by the night bus. They are majestic things, they just get up and stand aside to let the bus pass." I am content to take his word for it.

A bus-stop. Most of the passengers jump down, throw their limbs about, and drink coconuts at a wayside shop. I see a finger-post on the branch road with the inscription 'Sakkrepatna' on it; and it stirs up associations in the mind. Wasn't this the capital of King Rukmangadha? We slide back a few thousand years. . . . . . Now comes to mind the story of the waterman who stopped a flood with his life. Four miles west of Sakkrepatna is Ayyankere, a magnificent reservoir formed by embanking a perennial stream at the foot of Sakunagiri. It is a deep tank with thirty-five feet of water in some places, and the embankment is 1,700 feet long and 300 feet high. Once the tank was about to breach, and it was revealed to the waterman in a dream by the guardian Goddess of the tank. He pleaded with the Goddess and made her promise that she would not breach it till he ran up to Sakkrepatna, informed the king, and returned with his orders. The king on hearing of it realized that the only way to prevent the catastrophe

would be to prevent the return of the waterman for ever, and so had him killed on the spot. The tank was saved; it is still intact, and there is a shrine at Sakkrepatna erected to the memory of this waterman.

The sudden sounding of the bus horn jerks one back to the present. The bus driver becomes impatient with the coconut drinkers and threatens that unless they come running back to their seats before the next sounding of the horn, he will leave them to their coconuts and go forward.

At four o'clock in the evening we reach Chikmagalur. According to certain traditions this was a dowry bestowed on his younger daughter by King Rukmangadha, and he gave his elder daughter Hiremagalur, which is a mile off. Hiremagalur is identified as the place where Janamejaya of *Mahabharata* performed a great serpent sacrifice in order to avenge the death of his father from snake-bite. There is a stone pillar at the spot where the sacrifice was performed, and the belief is that a person bitten by a snake can ward off the poison if he goes round this pillar after a bath in a nearby pond.

Chikmagalur nestles in a valley south of

Bababuden Range, and looking about from here one is struck by the number of hill ranges that stretch away in wave after wave on all sides. The town itself is very attractive with its bright, new buildings, vast open grounds, its tree-covered slopes, and parks. You feel here that if you go beyond the town limits you may step off into blue, empty space. This town is really a jumping off ground for an excursion through the most impressive mountain country in Mysore State.

Next I am in a bus which is to take me to Kemmangandi, one of the highest points in the Bababuden Range. The road passes through dense coffee estates, wriggles at the foot of towering mountain slopes, and over the edge of valleys covered with immense stretches of forests. At every turn, in the distance, fantastic mountain peaks rear up, keep us company for a mile or two and recede; the most prominent of them being *Kudure-Mukh* or Horse-face, so named on account of its appearance. It is the loftiest peak in the Western Ghats and from time immemorial a familiar land-mark to navigators on the West Coast.

On this road, about eight miles from Chikmagalur, there is the tomb of an

ancient Mohammedan saint from whom this range takes its name. To do him justice we must think of him whenever we drink coffee. It was he who first introduced coffee into India. When he took up his residence at this place he brought with him a few seeds from Mocha and planted them for his use. Every coffee plant that stands on any hill slope in India today is a great great grandchild of the first plants that Bababuden reared. The cave containing his tomb is very sacred to Mohammedans. This cave is equally sacred to Hindus, who believe that Dattatreya disappeared into it ages ago and will reappear on the day Vishnu incarnates as Kalki before the Deluge.

In the evening the bus precipitates me at Kemmangandi and disappears in a cloud of red dust. This is a tiny hill station at a height of 4,752 feet above sea level. It captures a traveller's heart at first sight—its neat red roads winding up, hedged by lovely plants; its garden and woodland schemes; the quiet beauty of the buildings belonging to the Palace; and the footpaths mysteriously going up and down, leading to the valleys and grassy uplands and forests. Here live half a dozen officials

belonging to the Palace, Bhadravathi Iron Works, and to the Forest Department. These are a set of robust cheerful souls perfectly happy in their mountain home, not in the least worried about the outside world, and completely absorbed in their work : the forest officer suddenly appears from some jungle and vanishes before daybreak into it once again ; the palace officials tend the garden and the buildings ; the Bhadravathi people blast the mountain side and load the ore in buckets which roll down a cableway into the valley below.

The great event in their daily life is the arrival of a bus morning and evening. Their attuned ears catch the bus sound a mile off, and they are on the road when it arrives, eagerly looking for their newspapers, mail-bag, and for a possible visitor.

These people are fanatically devoted to the place and won't allow a single word of doubt to cross one's lips : "Mosquitoes? Mosquitoes are unheard of things here. You will never catch a cold here. Drink our water and it will cure you of all ills." I casually mention that I am proceeding next to Gersoppa Falls. The young man who is my host looks almost shocked and

denounces even the mighty Gersoppa Falls. They are all agreed that Gersoppa is a sadly over-rated business: "You must see the falls we have up here, falling down three hundred feet."

"How far is it?"

"About three miles. The climb is worth it; if you see it you will never go near Gersoppa Falls again." I wish I had the energy and the time to go up and see this rival to Gersoppa. And then my friend tells me about some strange herbal plot, about half a furlong in length, a walk through which is a cure for heavy stomach. You may eat the heaviest stuff, but a walk through the path will digest it, and you will have to go back and eat again, you may come again and digest it, and go back and fill your stomach once more . . . "There is a magic property in this atmosphere," declares the young man fervently.

I spend a part of the night gazing at the dark valley in front of the veranda, and far away beyond a ridge the sky-line is lit up as if by a full moon below; these are the lights of Shimoga town about thirty miles away.

The next morning I notice great activity in a neighbouring house, much calling, shout-

ing, and excitement. "What is the matter?" I ask. "The barber is come," announces my friend. He tells me that a wandering barber comes from Shimoga or somewhere occasionally, and when he is seen he is held up, and everyone has his hair cut, and calls up his friends. There is no knowing when the barber will come next, so that while the opportunity lasts everyone has his hair cut, and cut as short as possible.

They reluctantly allow me to go when the bus arrives, only on my promise that I will visit them again (which I hope I shall be able to fulfil some day).

"What other things can I see here?" I ask.

"We won't tell you. You can spend a whole week here. You had better come again and see for yourself. Your book won't be complete unless you devote a whole section of it to Kemmangandi."

"All right," I promise lightly and get into the bus, and they stand on the road waving till the bus is out of sight.

Sringeri

ABOUT twelve centuries ago Sankaracharya was born at Kaladi (near Cochin) of parents who had been childless for long. They had been praying night and day for an issue. In answer to their prayer Shiva appeared in the guise of an old man, in a dream, and asked, "Do you want numerous children who live a hundred years but who are dullards and evil-doers or only one son who is exceptionally gifted but who will live with you for only a short time?" The mother rejected mere quantity. Sankaracharya was born, with only sixteen years as his allotted span of life. In his fifth year he learnt the *Gayatri* and underwent spiritual discipline; in his eighth year he mastered all the shastras, puranas, veda, vedanta, and sutras. And a little later he renounced the world and donned the ochre robe.

The rest of his life is the record of a great teacher. Through his writings, debates, and talks, he spread far and wide his *advaita* philosophy—a doctrine which says that all

that exists is a particle of a great soul and merges in the end in that soul. "His was the task of ending the nightmare of separateness," says one of his commentators.

After travelling extensively he came to Sringeri. Sringeri had already been sanctified by the presence of great sages like Vasishta, Viswamitra, Vibhandaka, Kasyapa, and others, who had their ashrams in its forests and performed *tapas*. A look at this place will make us understand why it was so favoured, a place surrounded with green hill tops and immense forests, and watered by the river Tunga, which is considered to be more sacred than any other river in the world. If Ganga springs from Vishnu's feet, Tunga springs from his face, and the gods are said to bathe in it.

Before making up his mind to settle here Sankara stood on the right bank of the river and looked about. This spot is now marked by a little shrine. He had in his hand the golden image of Sharada or Saraswathi, the Goddess of knowledge and culture, for whom he was going to build a temple, which was to be the central power-house, so to speak, of his philosophy and institution which was born of it. At his feet Tunga flowed, its

water turned silvery by the rays of the mid-day sun. As he stood observing the surroundings Sankara beheld a sight on the opposite bank which thrilled him and made him realize that he had come to the end of his journey. A cobra spread its hood and held it like an umbrella over a frog, protecting it from the heat of the sun. "This is the place!" Sankara said on seeing it. "Here is harmony, an absence of hate even among creatures which are natural enemies." Even today on the river step a tiny niche made of a couple of stones marks the spot where this phenomenon was seen. The niche is filled with mud and sand but a slight excavation with fingers will reveal the cobra and the frog carved on a stone.

Sankara crossed the river. This village was henceforth to be of vital importance to humanity, its significance to last beyond the reckoning of time. Hence he first proceeded to build four guardian temples in the surrounding hillocks, which were to protect the place from all possible dangers, diseases, and evils. On the eastern hillock he built a temple for Kalabhairava, on the western hillock for Anjaneya, on the southern hillock for Durgi, and on the northern for Kali.

Even today worship is being performed thrice a day in these temples. The people of Sringeri have strong faith in the protection that these guardians afford. I had a surprising instance of it from the person who was acting as my guide and who was a vaccinator. During our walk he casually mentioned that there were a few cases of typhoid in the town. When I asked him what measures they were taking to combat it he said, " We are quite confident that none of these cases will turn fatal. My daughter too had an attack of it and a relapse, and its only effect has been the loss of hair. As long as we have these, " he pointed at the temples on the hillocks, " we have nothing to fear. In summer we have a few cases of small-pox too. But there is nothing to worry or fear. This place is protected. If any of the cases turn fatal it will be due to extraordinary karma, and nothing can be done about it. " I admired his grand faith; all the same I could not help pressing upon him the need for giving wide-spread anti-typhoid injections. He at once made a note of it. Though this incident is trivial it indicated to me a certain resilience and breadth of mind and an

absence of bigotry which seem to me the very essence of the culture Sankara fostered. My vaccinator friend could very well have denounced my suggestion as mere human vanity and lectured to me on the power of faith; but he did not do it, and I believe, could not do it.

* * * *

There is a repose and tranquillity in the air. The river flows softly. Strolling along its edge I notice a group of young men with an elderly companion in their midst. They are all bathing in the river and washing their clothes and are at the same time listening to the lecture their elderly companion is giving them and answering the questions he is putting to them. When they get up to go, muttering their lessons, I follow them through the narrow passage between the consecrated tombs of ancient saints behind Vidyasankara temple. I follow them into a large hall where groups of students are squatting in shady corners, quietly chanting their lessons and memorizing. A few elderly persons, wrapped in shawls, move about on noiseless footsteps, absorbed in their own discussion. The place has a monastic quietness.

In the upper storey there is a library containing over four thousand manuscripts and books, neatly classified, labelled and arranged in glass shelves. In an adjoining room some persons are sitting before huge heaps of manuscripts and books; they are at their task of selecting, rejecting, and classifying, the vast store of manuscripts and books that has accumulated in the *math* from time immemorial. They have been at this task for five years and are likely to go on for a couple of years more.

In the central courtyard there is a shrine, fittingly enough, for Sankaracharya. For this is a college run by the *math*, providing a course of studies which extend over ten years; and here young men are trained for a religious life. It has about eighty pupils with eight or ten masters, each one an authority in some branch of Sanskrit learning. Forty of the pupils are being looked after by the *math* itself. Once a year the pupils are examined and the passed candidates are led by their masters across the river to the presence of the chief guru, the apostolic head who lives in a house on the opposite bank of the river. He is a man of deep learning and austerity, whose

hours are occupied with meditation, prayer, worship, and studies. He tests the boys himself, and to those who pass the test he distributes clothes and money gifts.

* * * *

There is a *sanyasi* sweeping the temple of Anjaneya and decorating the image with flowers, completely absorbed in his work, and completely indifferent to those passing him. To my enquiry my guide answers: "He is one of the four or five *sanyasis* here. He speaks to no one. He came here some years ago and has been here since. We don't know where he has come from. He spends most of his time in yoga: occasionally when he is free he sweeps the temples. Since he is here he is our guest." I observe two *sanyasis* sitting on the river step with closed eyes. Their purpose is also unknown. One of them, it was vaguely understood, came all the way from some place in northern India in order to discuss certain questions with the chief guru and have certain doubts cleared. After coming he never met the guru, but just stayed on, dividing his time between meditation and work: he voluntarily teaches certain subjects in the university. There is another *sanyasi*

who is here as a pupil in the college. No one questions who they are or why they are here or how long they are going to stay, but treats them as honoured guests as long as they stay. One most noticeable feature of Sringeri is its attitude as host to whoever visits it. The moment you are there you are freed from the concerns of food and shelter. As soon as you get down from the bus you are shown a room in the Dharmashala or in the Guest House. And then your hot water is ready for your bath, and as soon as you have bathed, your food is brought to you. There is an old cook, bent with age, who gets up every morning at four o'clock and goes to bed at eleven in the night, spending his waking hours in serving guests. I saw how deeply the spirit of hospitality had sunk in the people here when I caught the old man in a talkative mood: "Before I came here I was a clerk in Trichinopoly jail. Through some adverse circumstances I became unhappy, very unhappy and then suffered from mental derangement. I came here, sought the *guru*, and begged him to permit me to wear the ochre cloth and become a *sanyasi*. He refused because I have a large family to support, and ordered that

I should live here with my family and seek peace in serving the pilgrims. And now, I have done it for forty years." He collects the tips given to him, puts them by, and spends it twice a year in feeding the poor. Every day nearly two hundred persons are being fed by the *math*, excluding the pupils in the university, the *sanyasis*, and others. This hospitality is not confined to human beings. In the niches of the temple towers there are thousands of pigeons living and breeding. From the stores of the *math* four seers of rice are scattered for the pigeons every day; they provide a grand spectacle when they sweep down for their rice at the feeding hour. In addition to this, five seers of rice are cooked and thrown in the river for the fish. There are numerous fish of all sizes in the river, sporting and splashing about, which come to the surface expectantly whenever any human being stands on the river step. The fish and the birds have lived and grown without knowing any fear of human beings.

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There are numerous temples in Sringeri besides the chief one of Sharada. The temple of Vibhandaka in Sringeri itself and

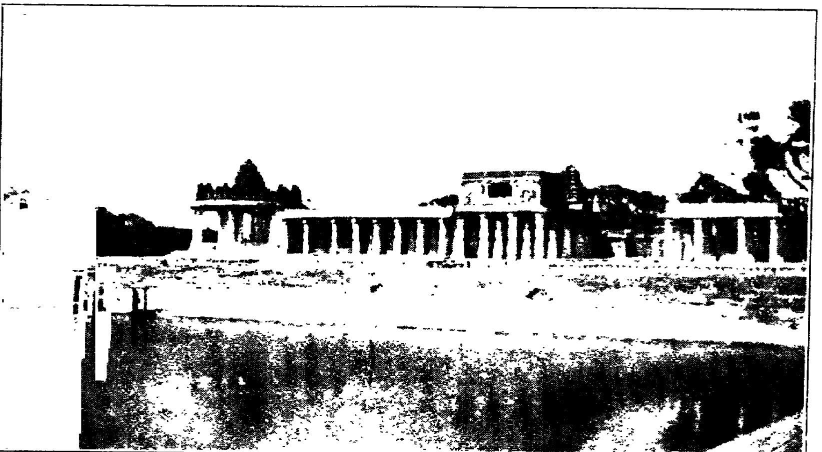
of his son Rishyasringa, which is at Kigga, six miles from Sringeri, built on a high hill, are two of the oldest temples here. Both are of the same type with an inner shrine in the middle, an open corridor around, and a roofed platform edging the corridor; the platform can accommodate thousands of persons at a time. It is believed that by praying at these temples rain can be called or stopped. Vibhandaka and his son are famous sages mentioned in the early portions of *Ramayana*. Rishyasringa, like his father, was a man of great attainment, but he had grown up without seeing a woman. At that time there was a severe drought in Anga; the king was told that the drought would cease if Rishyasringa could be brought to his state and married to the princess. A bevy of young women disguised as hermits were sent in order to entice this sage. They arrived, stopped at Narve, a village near Sringeri, waited for an opportunity and appeared before the young man when his father was out of the scene. He felt such a deep interest in these strange hermits that it was not very difficult for them to decoy him. His approach to Anga brought rain. He married the princess and

became the priest of king Dasaratha of Ayodhya, and officiated at the great sacrifice which resulted in the birth of Rama, the hero of Ramayana. There is a carving on a pillar in the Rishyasringa temple at Kigga in which the young sage is shown as he is being carried off happily on a palanquin made of the intertwined arms of fair women.

Another important temple is Vidyasankara's built in about 1357 A.D. It is on the left bank of Tunga, of Chalukyan style, and built on a raised terrace. Round the outer walls are intricate carvings depicting scenes from the epics and puranas. One of the most interesting figures carved is that of Vyasa discoursing to Sankara. This perhaps illustrates the episode in Sankara's life when the sage Vyasa came to him in the guise of an old man when he was teaching a group of disciples on the banks of Ganges. Sankara was teaching a certain work of which Vyasa himself was the author. Vyasa objected to Sankara's interpretation, and Sankara would not admit the objection. A great debate ensued which went on for seventeen days, neither side giving in. At this the others grew alarmed. Sankara's



SRINGERI.



THE BEAUTIFUL TANK AT MELKOTE.

chief disciple appealed to them : " Oh, great Vyasa, you are the incarnation of Vishnu, and oh, my master, you are Shiva. When you both argue and debate what is to happen to us, poor mortals ? How can we bear to watch this mighty conflict ? " And the debate was stopped. Vyasa blessed Sankara for his grasp of the subject and his interpretation. And as Sankara was about to complete his sixteenth year in a couple of hours, Vyasa conferred on him a further span of sixteen years.

* * * *

The temple of Sharada is the most important institution here. This is the holiest sanctuary which any human being could be privileged to enter, the centre round which the life of Sringeri revolves. At the evening hour of worship the temple is transformed with lights, music, incense, and flowers. Standing at the inner shrine one has a feeling of elation. At this moment the golden image of Sharada in the innermost shrine shining in the lamp light and the swaying flames of camphor, appears to be not a mere metal image but a living presence, and one gets a feeling that one can go on standing here for ever looking at its tranquil and distinguished face.

Eloquent Stones

HASSAN town appeals to the eye for its soft beauty. Everything about it is gentle. There is something quiet about its landscape: grassy downs, groves, and friendly trees on the roadside. The trees of Shimoga district overwhelm us by their gigantic proportions and numbers, but it is impossible to feel close to them. They are too mighty and aloof; whereas the trees on the roadside at Hassan, though they go up to great heights, have something mellow and human about them. The tall mango tree scattering fruits on the yellow road dust, the murmuring casuarinas filigreeing the perspective; the Gold Mohur with its red blooms meeting the eye everywhere; and the reposeful banyan dangling its roots.

This town is a portal through which one escapes into a remote culture, whose only remnants now are its stones. But we realize how eloquent stones could be when we see the temples at Belur and Halebid, and the colossus at Sravanabelagola.

* * * *

Belur is twenty-five miles from Hassan, on the bank of river Yagachi. About 1100 A.D. a Hoysala king Ballala I made it his capital. His brother Bittiga succeeded him in 1106. It was the time of the great Vaishnava saint and reformer Ramanuja-charya, who sought refuge in Mysore from the persecutions of Chola kings. Bittiga, who was a Jain, was greatly influenced by Ramanujacharya's teachings and became a Vaishnavite and changed his name to Vishnuvardhana. In this zeal he marched an army against the Cholas, and captured Talkad in 1116. He commemorated this victory by building a number of temples all over the state; the most impressive among them being the one he built at his capital, dedicated to Kesava. It was completed in 1117, the work having been designed, con-structed, and decorated by Jakanachari. At least most of the work is said to have been done by him, though a few of the sculptures have under them the names of other work-men: Dasoja of Belgami, Chavana, Nagoga of Gadag, Masana of Lakkundi and others.

Belur today is a very small town, with its straggling shops and a winding roadway. It is hard to believe that it could have been the

capital of an ancient kingdom which flourished for four centuries. But step behind the travellers' bungalow, and go up the small street, past the huddled, smoky-tiled dwellings, and you will suddenly come upon the temple Vishnuvardhana built over eight centuries ago. At first you are likely to mutter, "another crumbling old thing." For in perspective it is unprepossessing. But enter the temple door, cross the stone-paved court, and go up the short flight of steps. You are now under the eastern doorway of the shrine, up on the star-shaped platform, five feet high, on which the temple is built. You will now feel a change coming over you: you are beginning to feel slightly bewildered. You see before you a thousand objects worth your notice and you don't know where to begin. It is no good trying a guide: he explains too much. Nor is it much use taking with you a companion who knows a little of everything. "Did you see this dancer at the angle?" shouts your friend from somewhere while you are being torn between the durbar of Vishnuvardhana and that beauty holding a mirror. A moment later comes the voice again, "Come here and see this scene from *Mahabharata*.

Arjuna is rescuing the cows of Virata. Don't waste your time there." And you run up and see the panels. And then you say, "Did you see the court of Vishnuvardhana?" And you tempt your friend to your old place. And so on back and forth, half seeing here, pulled up to something else there, and you very soon realise that this won't do. The best way out of this confusion is for you to sit down, shut your eyes, and let your head cool a bit. And then get up and propose to your friend that you are to leave each other alone for three hours. When this agreement is reached, fix your eyes on the walls of the temple and slowly walk on the platform. You will need a whole day if you wish to see every bit carved on the walls. The profusion is amazing: there is not a blank space on any part of the wall. In addition to scroll work and repeated motiffs, all the well-known episodes in the epics and mythology re-live before our eyes. All the avathars that Vishnu took every time he had to come down to earth to redeem truth from untruth and save it from violence; his appearance as Vamana, as Varaha, as Narasimha. And then episodes from *Mahabharata*: Arjuna rescuing the

cows, or looking down a pan of oil and shooting into the eyes of a fish on a pillar above, by the reflection. This was a condition he had to fulfil before marrying Draupathi. There are individual images in particular situations created for them by the imagination of sculptors in order to show movement and gesture in stone. In a large number of instances the figures have been identified as that of Mohini, a feminine incarnation which Vishnu took in order to destroy Bhasmasura who had obtained a blessing that he could never be killed by another hand, while his hand placed on a head burnt down the person. Thus he had reduced to ashes the whole of humanity and the world was helpless. Vishnu appeared before him in the guise of a woman of great beauty and danced. Hypnotized by this magic dance the giant too danced in imitation, and Mohini at an intense moment of her performance placed her hands on her head; the giant followed her example and was at once burnt down. We see Mohini in the bracket near the east doorway surveying herself in a mirror, putting a vermilion dot on her forehead, perhaps preparatory to her annihilating

dance. On another bracket near the south doorway we see her at the end of her triumphant dance. And then we have the damsel who just discovers a scorpion at the end of her saree; the sudden terror and surprise in her face and her effort to throw off the scorpion are so well presented that we forget for a moment that we are witnessing only a petrified tableau. And then the lady balancing on one foot while her servant puts on to her the toe-rings; the damsel who is horrified at the pranks of her pet monkey which is pulling her saree end; and so on and on. Every bit is like watching a dance act, a masterly performance of *Bharat Natya*.

On entering the hall the first object we see is a pair of huge sandals kept on a pedestal. This is a presentation to the God from the cobbler community. The story behind this tradition is that when the temple was completed the image of God was brought from Bababuden Hills, where the image of the Goddess was left behind. This God makes occasional trips to the Hills in order to see her, wearing these sandals. When the sandals are worn out the cobblers of some villages in Shimoga district

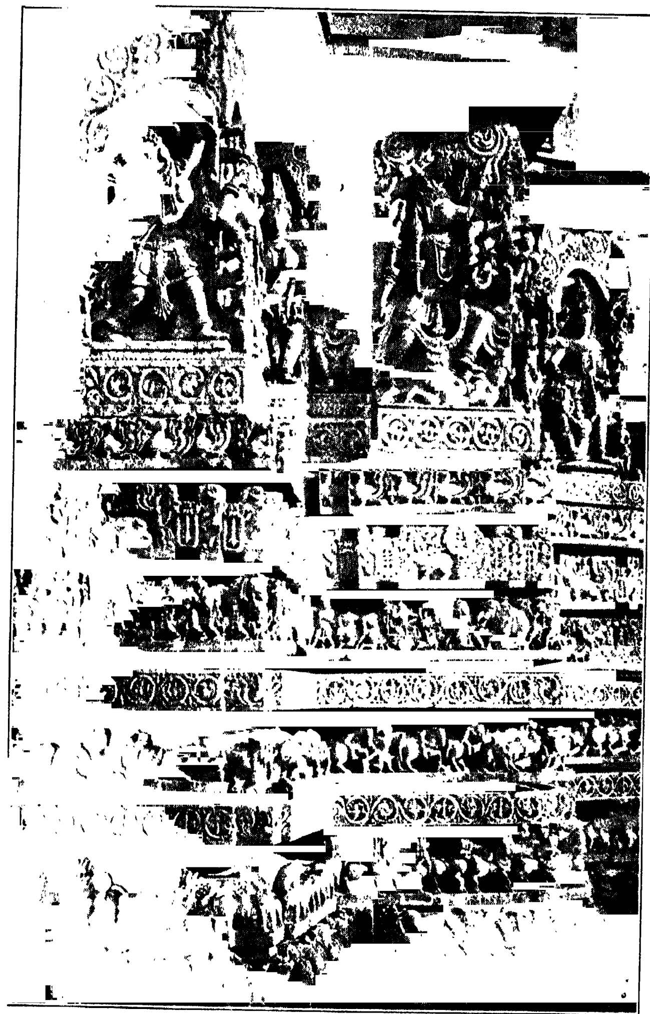
learn of it in a dream and make at once a new pair for the God. When they come to present a new pair they are admitted in the courtyard of the temple. Once a year, during the annual festival, the Untouchables are allowed into the hall and permitted to see the God during worship.

The hall is very dark. A beam of sunlight is thrown in by means of a mirror held outside. The spot of light travels upon the pillars and reveals to us a rich variety of them: square, octagonal, twelve-sided, thirty-two-sided, round, lotus-shaped, and star-shaped, with intricate carvings on them. And then the immense dome in the ceiling, twenty feet high and thirteen feet square, which is a world by itself. The inner shrine contains an image of Chennakesava. This is the very heart of the whole structure. All the architectural excellence, artistry, and workmanship, are a dedication to this image, to which the sculptor has imparted a godly personality: in its eye is tranquillity, in the smile on its lips, grace, and in its gesture, protection.

* * * *

Now tracing the sad fortunes of the temple as it fluctuated with the fortunes of





VIEW OF THE OUTER WALL AT HALEBID TEMPLE.

royal dynasties. The temple flourished during the reign of Ballala I; in the succeeding generations were added certain new items. Originally the temple had been planned, certainly not to be seen by the reflected light from a mirror. In front of the sanctum was a pillared pavilion, open on the eastern side, admitting full light. In the succeeding generation the pavilion of exquisite pillars was walled up: it was walling up although the walls were artistic and had carved doorways; and then a high wall was built around the temple, and domestic additions like a pond, granary, etc., were made. These are attributed to Ballala II. In 1326 one of Tuglak's generals raided the temple and burnt down the gateway. And then for a while (in the time-measure of history) it was borne up as on the crest of a wave, with the rise of Vijayanagar Empire; and on it now lay hands that healed and revived: a gopura on the gate was constructed and two other temples were built in the compound in addition to a front pavilion. Between 1640-66 it regained its eminence when it became the capital of Sri Ranga Raya III, the last of the Vijayanagar Emperors; but it had the corollary

disadvantage of going down with him. Then the temple came to be forgotten. Its walls crumbled. Coconut and champak grew wildly in its compound. And then came a hope of resurrection in a very peculiar manner during the late Muslim days: a Bijapur Governor cut a path through the grove, walled up the sanctum, and held his court in the temple hall. After that some straying Mahrattas walked away with the gold plated copper sheets kept in the recesses of the temple.

The main vimana tower which had been alternately collapsing and cropping up according as it was neglected or cared for, was for the last time buttressed and propped up during Haidar Ali's time, and was topped by a golden kalasa. It now held up its golden crest, but not for long. Once again the insidious, invisible battering ram was at work. The tower cracked and threatened to collapse, and with it threatened to damage the whole temple; but very wisely in the eighties of the last century the tower was taken down once for all.

To the list of injuries done to the temple must be added the handiwork of recent vandals: the priests of the temple them-

selves, misguided beings, who plastered the walls with lime and white-washed frantically whenever any person of importance visited the temple. Thus they have succeeded in covering up many of the sculptures and done injury to the quality of the stone. This was a convention repeated as often as there were important visitors and it has meant a great deal of labour and expense for the government to undo this act of courtesy.

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Halebid, about nine miles from Belur, is now a drab little village, but it was after the time of Ballala I the capital of the Hoysalas, renowned for its wealth and splendour. Of its artistic and cultural eminence the only witnesses are its temples, recently renovated at great expense. Of the Kedaresvara temple Fergusson says, " . . . . from the basement to the summit it was covered with sculptures of the very best class of Indian art, and these so arranged as not materially to interfere with the outlines of the building, while they imparted to it an amount of richness only to be found among specimens of Hindu art." Of the Hoysalesvara temple he says, "It is perhaps the building on

which the advocate of Hindu architecture would desire to take his stand. Unfortunately it was never finished, the works having been stopped after they had been in progress apparently for eighty-six years . . . . No two facets of the temple are the same; every convolution of every scroll is different. No two canopies in the whole building are alike, and every part exhibits a joyous exuberance of fancy scorning every mechanical restraint. All that is wild in human faith or warm in human feeling is found portrayed on these walls."

Besides these the other remnants of the capital are the weed-covered patch of ground with a scrap of wall over it near Benne Gudda hillock, which is pointed out to us as the site of the palace; and there where you see nothing the royal stables stood.

The cause, according to historical facts, for the ruin of the capital was that with Ballala III the Hoysala power came to an end. In 1310 Malik Kafur, Allauddin Khilji's general, invaded the Hoysala dominion. The capital was sacked and the victor returned to Delhi carrying a great load of booty. There was some effort to reconstruct it by Narasimha, who transferred his capital to Belur.

It was however futile and pathetic like the effort of a child to keep his sand castle standing while heavy feet are moving about and constantly knocking it down. In 1326 Mohamed Bin Tuglak sent another expedition, and the city was completely razed to the ground. The king fled to Mysore and with him the Hoysalas made their exit from history.

There is a legend attributing the downfall of the Hoysalas and the ruin of the capital to a woman's curse. A sister of the king was on a visit to the capital and with her came her two handsome sons. One of the king's wives tried to seduce the young men but was repulsed, and angered by it she turned the tables on them and complained to the king that they had made overtures to her. The king ordered his handsome nephews to be impaled and their bodies to be exposed at the city gates. The sister was cast out and the inhabitants of the town were forbidden to shelter her. She wandered the streets muttering her curse on her brother and the whole empire. It was only in the potters' street that she received water and shelter and she exempted the street from her curse. And all that is left of a mighty empire is perhaps this potters' street.

* * * *

Sravanabelagola is 31 miles from Hassan. This is the spiritual home of the Jain sect. Here Bhadrabahu, one of the immediate successors of Mahavira's personal disciples, died in a cave on Chandra Betta. With him came Chandragupta, who had renounced his throne and become a hermit. These events are assigned to the third century B.C.

On Indra Betta, 3,250 feet above sea level, was erected the statue of Gomateswara in 983 A. D. "The statues of this Jain saint (Gomateswara)," says Fergusson, "are among the most remarkable works of native art in the south of India. Three of them are well-known, and have long been known to Europeans. That at Sravanabelagola attracted the attention of the late Duke of Wellington when, as Sir A. Wellesley, he commanded a division at the siege of Seringapatam. He, like all those who followed him, was astonished at the amount of labour such a work must have entailed, and puzzled to know whether it was a part of the hill or had been moved to the spot where it now stands. The former is the more probable theory. The hill is one mass of granite about 400 feet in height and probably had a mass or tor standing on its summit—either a part

of the subjacent mass or lying on it. This the Jains undertook to fashion into a statue 58 feet in height, and have achieved it with marvellous success. The task of carving a rock standing in its place, the Hindu mind never would have shrunk from, had it even been twice the size; but to move such a mass up the steep smooth side of the hill seems a labour beyond their power, even with all their skill in concentrating masses of men on a single point. Whether, however, the rock was found *in situ* or was moved, nothing grander or more imposing exists anywhere out of Egypt, and even there, no known statue surpasses it in height, though, it must be confessed, they do excel it in the perfection of art they exhibit."

THE mass of writing in the pages of the visitor's book at Jog shows the extent to which a great aspect of Nature affects the human mind. Over the signature of a person whom I had every reason to expect to be prosaic and taciturn, I read :

"It is Oh
It is Ah
It is grand"

And much of the writing is in the same strain. In all this, needless to say, there is much that is irrelevant, incoherent, and nonsensical; but all have one common feature : a certain bouncing exuberance, and an irresistible desire to say something. After glancing through the pages of this book I was able to appreciate the forethought of the authorities in providing this outlet; this is a safety valve without which people would perhaps have burst or damaged the furniture and the crockery in the traveller's bungalow. A sight of the falls is in the nature of an impact. Professors,

businessmen, teachers, and administrators, clerks, and contractors, level-headed practical men, who would never dream of proclaiming or immortalizing their feelings at ordinary times, take a look at the falls, seize the pen, cry for the visitor's book, and write the most powerful and spontaneous poetry. Very few are able to retain their equanimity; so few indeed that among the hundreds who have written in the book these could be easily counted and remembered. For instance there was only one superman who could see the falls in all its magnificence during the season and yet write:

" . . . . . . My roast chicken attracted me more than these much advertised Gersoppa Falls; needless to say I left the moment the chicken was finished." Next to him comes the person who has nothing to say more than: " . . . . . . In October the leeches are frightful; so when you come bring a bottle of $Ca(OH)_2$." There was one of single-minded devotion: " Very happy to record that I caught a 20 lbs. mahseer. I hear they are even better up the river, but the going is very bad. The rocks are very slippery and wet. Grass shoes are ideal for wet

rocks, failing which I have found army socks pulled over rubber boots very serviceable." There was a confirmed grumbler and paterfamilias who had the heart to say: "The falls are grand, etc., but I wish that the authorities had constructed a railing in front of the Dak Bungalow so that children who come here may play about in safety." (The ravine is at a safe distance from the bungalow veranda.) This remark is on a level with what a person said at an intense moment during a music performance by a master when a thousand listeners sat dumbfounded; during this silence the person muttered to his darling son, "If you don't sleep under a mosquito net to-night I will spank you."

But men of such complacence are rare. A large majority of the people forget themselves when they look at the Falls. Our worries, troubles, vanities, calculations, and values, just shrivel up in the presence of this foaming hurling water, and the voice of the ego is hushed in its thundering roar.

* * * *

Sharavathi rises in Thirthahalli Taluk in Shimoga District at Ambu Thirtha (so named because it was created by a stroke

of Rama's arrow on a rock), and taking in a few streams on the way, meanders through the district in a north-westerly direction, and near the Bombay frontier turns abruptly west, and makes a precipitous descent into the ghats at Jog, and then flows into the sea eighteen miles off. The river descends the ghats in four cataracts. The mightiest of them is Raja, which hurls itself straight down a distance of 830 feet; its neighbour is Roarer, which joins it half way down; the third, Rocket, leaps down in a series of arcs, while the fourth, Rani or the Lady, true to its name, descends the mountain side very softly.

The Falls are seen at their best between October and January. Between June and October, during the monsoon, not much of them can be seen owing to the thick clouds of mist rising from the depths of the ravine. Lewis Rice quotes the description of a visitor to the Falls about fifty years ago, who came in August, and looked down the abyss, lying down on a slab of stone near the Dak Bungalow on the Bombay side: "I lay down flat on this shelf and drew myself up to the edge over which as I stretched my head a sight burst on the view which I shall

never forget and can never hope to describe. I have since looked down the fuming and sulphurous craters of Etna and Vesuvius, but have never experienced the sensations which overwhelmed me in the first downward gaze into this (hibernice) volcano of waters. One might almost gaze for ever on this abyss in which a mighty mass of water appears eternally burying itself in a mist-shrouded grave. The clouds of spray which continually ascend heavenwards in slow and majestic wreaths appear to typify the shadowy ghosts of entombed waters."

In summer the falls are rather mild, and the Raja Fall is totally absent. Even then they are worth a visit. Near the Mysore bungalow a winding path takes one down seven furlongs directly to the river bed. If anyone is curious to know how an ant dropped into the bottom of a large barrel would feel, he would do well to descend the seven furlongs, reach the river bed and look up the gigantic walls of the ravine on whose top trees stand like bunches of grass. Here man becomes an unimportant, stature-less mite. 'Pebbles' lying strewn on the river bed are as tall as human beings, sometimes taller, broader than the fattest of us,

polished to a smooth surface by the flow of water, and some of them have edges like the blade of a sword. It is exciting to hop from boulder to boulder, and reach the edge of the pool at the foot of the Falls, a pool 130 feet deep dug into the rock by the incessant hammering of water from above. The side of the hill over which the Raja flows during the season is now a barren yawning chasm. There is something grand, ferocious, and savage, about this chasm, which must have been, in a remote millenium, a smooth hill side, when the rock hadn't been chipped, dented, battered, and eaten away by the terrific rush of water. The hill side seems to hold up for view this monster scar on its face, while the Raja allows it a brief respite during summer.

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During the season it is a gorgeous place to be in. Sitting on a stone seat and gazing at the scene you cease to feel the burden of time; you don't have to plan out your hours laboriously. The hours slip by unnoticed as you sit listening to the thunder of water and watch its rushing volume.

Over this scene of might and force there always hovers a touch of exquisite delicacy.

A rainbow stands poised on the waters when the sun tilts westward, and lengthens with the declining sun. Innumerable rock pigeons fly about and dot the space about the rainbow; they are so far below that, as someone has said,* they look like dragon flies. The pigeons have made their homes in the ledges and shelves in the rocks behind the falling waters and have stored up great quantities of grains.

*   *   *   *

The rainbow melts in the twilight. As night comes on and darkness creeps up from the bowels of the abyss, the Falls grow vague before our eyes, and gradually become more a sound than a sight, their clamour increasing with the stillness of the night. I sit listening to it for a while and start back for the traveller's bungalow, despairing of ever being able to describe this scene. In some such mood must have Lewis Rice written : " No words can suffice to adequately describe the charms of a scene replete with every element of the sublime, combining in one super panorama so many varying aspects both of terror and of beauty, all instinct with the life, the force and play of moving waters. "

Around Shimoga

Agumbe :

THIS hill town is about forty miles from Shimoga, bordering South Canara, and is one of the highest points in Western Ghats. From a platform constructed on the hill side a fine view can be had of the Arabian Sea. The platform is about a mile from the town, and the road leading to it is overhung with immense trees and passes through one of the densest forest regions in Mysore State. At the end of a mile, a turning suddenly brings before us a scene which stuns us at first sight. We find ourselves, as it appears, on the very edge of the mountain with a sheer drop of 2,000 feet. The plains of South Canara stretch away down below and end in a hazy horizon; where, the sea line, hardly a couple of inches in width, shimmers and trembles like some live object, under a bright sun. In the evenings as the sun falls into the sea the changing colours and forms of the sun, sky, and the sea, provide a spectacle which is worth travelling a thousand miles to watch.

This is one of the places where Parasurama, a mythological figure, lived. Parasurama was the son of Jamadagni, who had received from Indra the cow of plenty called Surabhi. Kartavirya, who had a thousand arms and superhuman powers, and who oppressed both men and gods, tried to seize the cow but did not succeed. On hearing of this attempt Parasurama chopped off his thousand arms and head with his famous axe. At this the sons of the dead man came and killed Jamadagni, whereupon his wife Renuka ascended the funeral pyre and burnt herself. With her dying breath she cursed her husband's murderers. Parasurama vowed to fulfil her curse. He completely wiped out the warrior race, Kshatriyas, from the earth with his axe which had been given him by Siva himself. He cleared the earth of Kshatriyas twenty-one times and then performed Horse Sacrifice in commemoration of his victory. Sage Kasyapa officiated as priest at the sacrifice and was given the earth itself as his fee. The sage accepted the fee and ordered Parasurama off his "territory" which was the whole earth. This was a ruse to get rid of Parasurama and save the

remaining few Kshatriyas, without whom there was no one to protect and rule the earth. Parasurama went to the ocean and applied to it for some land; the ocean rolled back and thus were created the coastal provinces along the Arabian Sea. Though the exact place of Parasurama's actions is undefined and is consequently claimed along the whole coast, my guide at Agumbe was certain that it was here, in these mighty forests that Parasurama had his *ashram* and that the sea was at one time laving the side of the mountain on which we were standing.

Bhadravathi :

LESS than an hour's journey from Shimoga this great industrial centre impresses us with its extent and ramifications. This is the largest factory in British Empire producing charcoal pig iron. Various things from lamp posts to sluice gates of Krishnaraj Sagar Dam, railway culvert pipes, steel bars, rods, angles, water supply and drain pipes, railings, gates, and fountains, all totalling over some thousands of tons; their bye-products, and cement, and paper, are manufactured here. The organization and

machinery responsible for slicing off the nearby mountain (Kemmangandi) and converting it into steel bars and cast iron pipes; the lime stone and clay deposits nearby into cement; and the surrounding bamboo forests into paper;—are as fascinating to watch as the Agumbe sunset or the tumbling waters of Jog.

Keladi Chiefs :

SAGAR which is about forty miles from Shimoga is a town on the way to Jog Falls. Less than four miles from this town are Keladi and Ikkeri, at present two unimpressive villages. Keladi was the original home of Bednur Chiefs, who ruled these parts for nearly three centuries. The most famous of them was Sivappa Nayak whose conquests extended as far as Shimoga in the east and Canara in the west, and whose expeditions extended from Balam to Vastra, Sakkrepatna and Hassan. He granted protection to Sri Ranga Raya, the fugitive king of Vijayanagar, in 1646, and even tried to attack Seringapatam on his behalf.

Keladi has interesting associations. Two brothers named Chavuda Gowda (1499-1513) and Badra Gowda had two servants

who while cultivating the fields noticed one day that a cow often went and shed her milk on an ant-hill. On digging the hill Chavuda Gowda found a lingam and built over it a temple. A few days later the servants dug up an old sword, and kept it in the old thatch, intending to make a scythe of it. Now they found that if a bird perched on the roof the sword leapt out in the form of a snake and killed it. This interested Chavuda Gowda who took out the sword, cleaned it, and kept it in the house. A few days later the ploughshare struck some metallic object which was found to be the ring of a cauldron. Chavuda Gowda had a dream in which he was directed to take the fabulous treasure contained in the cauldron after performing human sacrifice to it. When they heard of the dream the servants begged their master to sacrifice them to the cauldron. It was done. Immense wealth, a powerful sword, and the blessings of the deity in the temple, all come his way without his seeking, the Gowda felt that he was intended by fate to do something more than raise corn. He gathered a small force and subdued the neighbouring villages. News of his exploits

reaching Vijayanagar kings, he was taken prisoner and sent to the capital. There he offered to quell a rebellious Palegar. He was sent with a small force and did his work so well that the king released him and gave him back the conquests he had already made around Keladi.

Two mounds at the entrance to the village are indicated as the spots where the servants were sacrificed.

Chavuda Gowda later transferred his capital to Ikkeri (1560-1640). It was a flourishing capital. Its walls were sturdy and formed of three concentric enclosures; there was a palace of mud and timber, artistically gilded. Not much of this can be seen in Ikkeri now. All that remains of the old grandeur is the Aghoreswara temple. It is a very large, spacious, granite structure. It is empty and silent now, with grass growing in its corridors, and unmistakably conveying the impression of being fragment of a past, isolated, frozen, and left behind. The only living creature here seems to be the solitary priest who comes out of an obscure corner of the compound, with the keys of the temple, when some occasional visitor calls

him up. If we could unwind the reels of time we might perhaps see, four hundred years ago, what an important place this temple must have been in the capital, how great the prestige of the priest of the king's temple, and in the evenings what a gathering assembled in the spacious pillared hall, with flowers and incense . . . .

. . . .

In about 1640 Nagar (then Bednur) became the capital of the chiefs. The town rapidly grew. Its walls were eight miles in circumference and had ten gates. A hill in the centre had on it the palace of the king. A foreign traveller visiting it nearly a century after it was founded wrote: "The Bednur Prince is much more magnificent and powerful than those of Malabar. His kingdom produces many peculiar commodities, such as sandal-wood, which is found there in great abundance, as well as rice. . . . . . The city (Bednur) where the Raja holds his court lies some leagues inland, and is connected with the seaport by a fine road, planted with trees, which the inhabitants are obliged to keep in excellent order. This road is so secure that any stranger might go and sleep there with bags full of money,

and nobody would molest or rob him, for if such a thing occurred the people in the neighbourhood would not only be severely punished, but would be forced to make good the money." In 1763 Bednur was captured by Haidar Ali. "The Keladi, Ikkeri, or Bednur State was the most considerable of those absorbed into the present Mysore territories by the victories of Haidar Ali, and its conquest was always acknowledged by him to have established his fortune."—*Lewis Rice.*

Kodachadri :

A PLACE for one who can despise a climb of four miles, to whom a view from a great height is all-important, especially when there is a sea bounding the prospect. The top of the hill is a narrow ridge, in some places only twelve feet wide, with a precipice on either side. On the west there is almost a perpendicular drop of 4,000 feet, and down below the Canara forests stretch away, and beyond the forests the Arabian Sea. Fittingly enough for these surroundings the temple on the hill is dedicated to Hulideva, Tiger God, whose image has 32 arms.

Settihalli :

A FOREST lodge seven miles from Shimoga. It is one of the loveliest spots in a district full of beautiful places. The lodge is half way up a hill. The hill and the valley are completely covered with a forest where trees are a hundred feet high and even the undergrowth go up to thirty feet. A spring rushes out of the hill side about a mile and a half from the lodge, and flows down thirty feet in a cascade and disappears at the foot of the hill into the forest. Some genius of the forest department has led a rill along the winding hill side right round to the lodge. The rill meanders into the garden of the lodge, tumbles in small water-falls into the kitchen and bath, and dances away out of sight. Far from the haunts of human beings—the road ends with the lodge—with an almost primeval forest all round, the spot is as romantic as the heart of man could desire.

Chitaldrug

In the fifteenth century under the sovereignty of the Vijayanagar kings there were vassal chieftains who held large tracts of country and had a large number of followers. The most distinguished among them were the chiefs of Chitaldrug and Nidugal.

The Chitaldrug Nayaks were of Beda caste. They were hunters and mountaineers. All that we are able to gather of their early beginnings is that three families emigrated from somewhere near Tirupathi and settled in Bharmasagar in or about 1475. The grandson of one of these was the famous Timmanna Nayak who was appointed in 1508 by Vijayanagar king as Nayak of Holalkere and later of Chitaldrug. He fortified the hill and surrounded himself with all the vestments of an independent ruler. Roused by this the Vijayanagar king despatched an army against him. His place was besieged. During the siege the Nayak performed an act of great daring.

He slipped out of his fort at dead of night and stole into the enemy's camp, intending to carry off the horse belonging to the prince of Vijayanagar, who was commanding the army. As the Nayak was about to lift the rope of the horse, the groom stirred and opened his eyes. The horse thief pressed himself close to the earth and remained still. The groom drove the peg in once again and tied the horse to it. The peg went right through the hand of the Nayak. He bore the pain silently, waited for the groom to fall asleep again, cut off the hand pegged to the ground, and made away with the horse.

Timmanna Nayak's son, on the fall of Vijayanagar in 1564, assumed independence. In 1603, Kasturi Rangappa Nayak succeeded him, and in his reign several battles were fought and Chitaldrug territory was extended.

In 1676 Chikkanna Nayak was on the throne. He is famed for a very intelligent stratagem that he adopted when he had to defend Harihar against Mohammedans. He had lights fixed to the branches of trees and musicians to play in his encampment after nightfall and thus gave an impression

to his enemies that the army was there. He marched with his force by a circuitous route and surprised the enemy from behind.

Fighting, annexing, losing, dying, and reviving, the line continued. In 1762 Haidar Ali summoned the Nayak. The Nayak hesitated : he was unenviably placed, with the Mahrattas on one side and Haidar on the other. He was not yet decided whose friend he was to be. As a result of the hesitation Haidar's cavalry invaded the country and the Nayak was forced to pay a heavy fine and an annual tribute.

In 1777 Haidar Ali was threatened with a combined attack by Mahrattas and Nizam Ali. The Chitaldrug Nayak realised that presently Haidar was not going to matter much and withheld the contingent of troops Haidar expected from him. Haidar having warded off the danger that threatened him turned his attention to the chief who now offered to pay a fine for his miscalculation. Haidar besieged Chitaldrug for some time and then it was agreed that the chief was to pay a fine of 13 lakhs of pagodas. Meanwhile the Mahrattas were advancing and Haidar had to hurry away before the whole of the fine could be collected.

The Nayak, who had been ordered to follow Haidar with his troop, now felt that here was another occasion for him to waver and watch. To his intense shock the Mahrattas lost, and after a victorious march over all the country between the Tunga Bhadra and the Krishna, Haidar once again came and squatted before Chitaldrug, very indignant and fully resolved to teach the Nayak a lesson. The place was at last taken in 1779. Maddagiri Nayak and his family were sent to Seringapatam as prisoners.

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The Nidugal chiefs were another important line of rulers in this district, their territory extending from Chitaldrug to Pavugada in Tumkur district and from Molakalmuru to Sira. The founder of the house was Tippanna Nayak, so named because he was picked as an infant from a dung-hill or rubbish heap. According to tradition his mother conceived by the Sun when she was only seven years old. Her father, considering it a disgrace to own the child, abandoned it on a dung-hill, from where it was picked up by a cowherd. A few years later the cowherd went to Kamalapur, near Vijayanagar, where there

was an enclosure in which tigers were kept for show. One day, in the presence of the king, a tiger escaped and created a panic, but it was instantly killed by the boy who had come with the cowherd. The king grew interested in him and kept him in his court. Later the boy met and shattered the reputation of a famous athlete who had been considered invincible. For all these exploits the king granted Tippanna a tract in the east of Chitaldrug district, from where he extended his territory. He died in the latter half of 16th century, and divided his territory among his seven sons; who relinquished their possessions when the Bijapur army invaded their territory; the eldest of them who lost the ancestral town, Dodderi, retired to the hill of Nidugal and fortified it. There the family remained for a long time, paying a heavy tribute to Sira, and when Sira fell to Haidar in 1761, the Nidugal chief also submitted.

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Chitaldrug town is at the foot of a rambling pile of rocky hills, with stretches of fort walls flanking the hills and often disappearing around a bend. A number of

hills are scattered around, the top of each crowned with mighty fort walls, with a central peak reached through winding pathways between boulders and thorny scrub. Seven lines of fortifications are said to enclose the stronghold, but we cannot see the plan at one glance, partly because the walls have disappeared in some places, and because the area is indented with ranges of rock and valley—the valley being often but a goat track.

The palace in the inner fort was constructed by Tipu. Before it stands a gigantic trough, scooped out of a single stone and very well polished, which was used for watering elephants. The upper hill fort has very impressive fortifications, batteries, and masonry works, and 14 temples. Vestiges of the palace and fort of Palegars are also seen. The sturdy stone fortress as it now stands was built under Haidar and Tipu, and also the large granaries and pits for storing oil and ghee.

Three miles beyond the fort walls is situated the *Murgi math*, the residence of the chief *guru* of Lingayats. To the west, among a cluster of hills, is the *Ankli math*. Here are elaborate underground chambers,

which must be at least 400 years old. It is utterly impossible to guess for what purpose these were built. The chambers were discovered, with thick vegetation covering up the entrance, about sixty-eight years ago when the *math* was established.

Nearby are also found traces of an ancient city; and the archæological department is actively engaged in reconstructing its period and history.

Kaidala :

GULUR village, is half an hour's journey from Tumkur. Leaving the main road the jutka takes an abrupt turn to the right, and a couple of furlongs off we see a small grove in which nestles Kaidala village. At an ancient date it was the capital of a state and known as Kridapura. A comparatively recent and familiar association is the fact that it was the native village of Jakanachari the famous sculptor. Nriparaya was the ruler of Kridapura when Jakanachari began his career. His travels were extensive since he was engaged now at one court and now at another.

One day when he was at work on an image in the temple at Belur a young man approached him and asked, " Sir, may I ask you a question ? "

" Yes, but don't expect an answer," said the old sculptor and went on with his work. He was putting the finishing touches on the most important image in the temple—the image of Kesava for whom the temple was

being built. The young man asked, " Is this image intended for worship ? "

" Don't stand there and ask foolish questions. You could as well ask if the temple was meant for a god."

Undaunted by this cynicism the young man declared, " This image is unfit for worship."

The old sculptor stood up, shook his mallet at the other, and said " If you don't leave me instantly I will have you put in chains. Your words are inauspicious and ugly."

" I can prove that this stone is not pure," said the young man.

" Can you ? See this hand ; it has chiselled twenty-thousand forms of God till now, but I will chop it off if you will only show me any impurity in this stone." The young man got a little sandal paste and smeared it over the figure. The paste dried everywhere except near the navel, where, on examination, was found a cavity containing a toad.

The image was set aside as being unfit for worship, and Jakanachari cut off his arm according to his vow. It was later found that the critic was none other than his son

out in search of a long-lost father. After this Jakanachari was directed in a dream to return to his village and build a temple for Kesava. He obeyed the vision. When he completed the temple his arm was restored to him. *Kai Dala* means the restored arm. This temple can be seen even today. Some idea of its date is given by an inscription in the adjacent Iswara temple which was also built by Jakanachari. The inscription records that the temples were built in about 1150 in the reign of the Hoysala king, Narasimha.

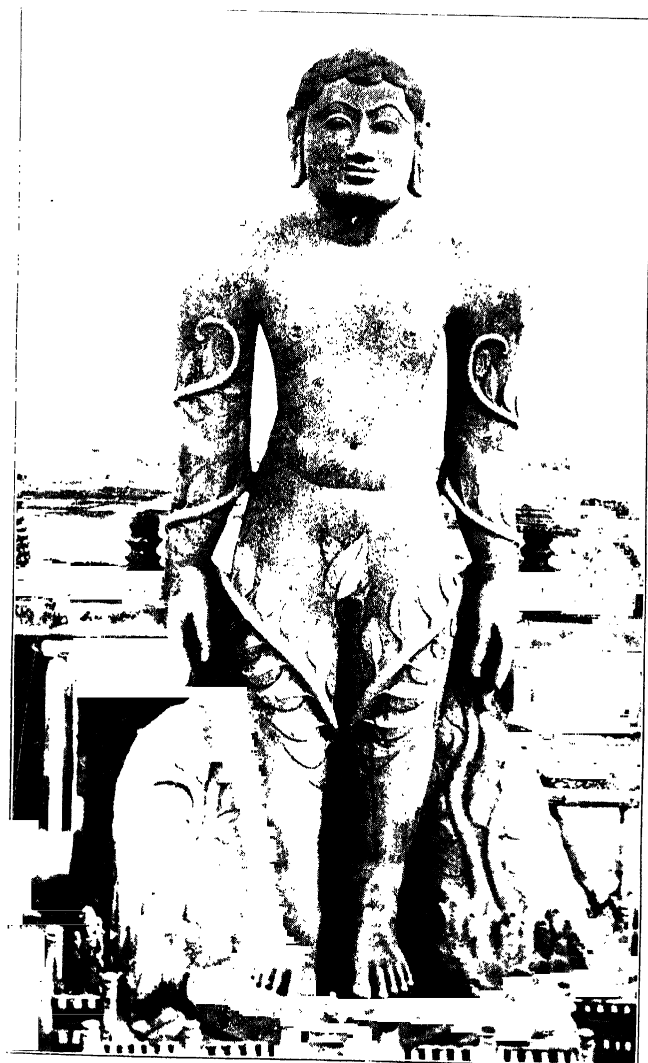
Devaraya Durga :

ABOUT nine miles from Tumkur, a fortified hill. Behind a forest bungalow at the foot of the hill there is a very attractive spot called " NAMADA CHILME "—a little cavity in a rocky bed, a cubit deep from which wells up an inexhaustible supply of water. This cavity, no bigger than a brass utensil, fills up as often as the water is removed, and it is supplying all the water needed for gardening, bathing, and washing, hereabouts. It is said that in the evenings peacocks, which are in plenty here, come out and dance around this spring. The place owes its name to the legend that Rama, while

on his expedition to Lanka, stopped here. He needed a little water for mixing his *nama* (forehead marking), and made this cavity in the rock. At his divine touch even a stone yielded water.

The summit of Devaraya Durga is 4,000 feet above sea level. The road winds up through thick jungles. On the summit there is a temple dedicated to Narasimhaswami, and another temple for the same God in the village 800 feet below.

According to stories a formidable robber chief had his stronghold here. He was subdued by Prince Sumati, son of a king of Karnata. After this enterprise he is said to have established a city near the present Nelamangala village in Bangalore district. There is also a tradition that on this hill there was a town called Anebiddajari, so named, because an elephant slipped and fell. An elephant, which was really a *Gandharva* in that form, suddenly appeared before the town and wrought havoc. For the people of the town there seemed to be no way of escape when the elephant itself offered an unexpected solution through its recklessness: it tried to rush up the steep rock on the west, fell back, and died.



town was taken. The fortifications were improved by Haidar Ali. The Mahrattas took it, but Tipu wrenched it back from them. He named it the City of Victory and made it the capital of a surrounding district. On the conclusion of the Third Mysore War, Maddagiri was included in Mysore territory.

Sira :

ANOTHER famous fortified town, about 33 miles from Tumkur. The town was founded by Rangappa Nayak, the chief of Ratnagiri. Before the fort was completed, Sira and its dependencies were conquered by a Bijapur general, and then became a provincial capital of the Mughal Governors when Aurangzeb captured Bijapur in 1687. The last of the governors was Dilawar Khan, under whom this town attained great prosperity, and is said to have consisted of 50,000 houses. He built a very elegant palace, on the model of which the palaces of Seringapatam and Bangalore were built. He also constructed a fine garden called Khan Bagh, which is believed to have suggested Lal Bagh of Bangalore.

In 1757 the Mahrattas captured Sira; in

1761 Haidar was given the title of Nawab of Sira; five years later it passed on to the Mahrattas once again and remained in their hands till Tipu wrenched it back in 1774. When he formed his new town of Shahar Ganjam, Tipu transferred 12,000 families from Sira to Seringapatam.

Kolar District

Gold Fields:

SITTING on a stool near a bunk we are waiting for a lift to come up. Rescue Party Instructions and Safety First Principles meet the eye everywhere. There is an 'Accident Board' on which are written the names of miners who have gone down and had accidents. "The accident per thousand is about . . . . . , very much less than the road accidents in London," says the Inspector of Mines, reading my mind as I look at the board. Everything here has an air of danger and accident. Safety First is the religion here.

Suddenly a door opens where there was nothing a moment ago and a couple of men wearing metal hats come out, blinking in the day light. They at once acquire a strange interest, beings who have been underground for hours picking gold! The lift is ready for us. I go into the bunk and sign an agreement absolving the company from all responsibility for my life and limbs. It is not very easy to sign a document of this kind. "I am bury-

ing myself; if I don't come out again I have only myself to thank for it." Is this my last moment in life? . . . . "Do you go down fairly often?" I ask.

"Certainly, every day; it is my business," says the gentleman; and this is re-assuring; his casualness is encouraging. He goes down every day; he comes up every day; so people do come up. I sign the agreement. After that I am given a skull cap and a sort of hat made of bamboo splinters. I try to evade it, because I know I look ridiculous with it on. But my friend won't hear of it. "We never permit anyone to go down unless they put these on. It is a protection for the head from falling stones." He picks up a lamp and we step into a lift; the door is chained up by an attendant. The lift starts down. Through the perforations in the lift I see patches of light dashing past and disappearing. We find ourselves in utter darkness, eerily lit up by the lamp.

"We are going down at the rate of 100 feet per minute (?)," says my friend. I see nothing going past except the wooden supports of the shaft walls. Here I am racing down. Who will know I am here? Suppose something happens to the cable of the lift

and we get stuck here, going neither down nor up. Slow suffocation in there like an ant put in a match box and buried. And so on grow my morbid imaginings. (I learn later that there is a steam-controlled arrangement always in readiness to step in if electricity should fail for any length of time.)

There is a slight heaviness in the chest and my ears are growing dull. I can't very clearly follow what my friend is saying. "Are you feeling funny about the ear? It is due to the great pressure we are in. . . . . We are now at sea level . . . . . We are below sea level now, a thousand feet below sea level." The lift comes to a stop, the door opens, and we step into a strange world. Controls, trolley lines, trollies, workmen, and officers—it is an extremely busy place. My friend takes me to the mouth of another shaft. "This shaft leads further down 4,000 feet, *i.e.*, 8,000 and odd feet from the surface." My head reels. The height of Nilgiris upside down! This makes it the deepest mine in the world. Compared to it the level where we stand appears to be the sunlit world on top, though it is 4,000 and odd feet deep. Even this place gives one a strange feeling: oppressive and light at the same

time, and difficult in the ears, nostrils, and chest, and the temperature is around 90° or 100°. Since I am not sure of being able to bear the temperature and pressure further down I have to content myself with seeing the mine at this level.

Through curving tunnel ways we go, pushing in the heavy steel ventilator doors which, opened, let into the tunnel a powerful gust of wind. It requires really a strong arm to push in this door and hold it tunnel after tunnel. Jagged rocks overhead and around, walls from which ores have been removed, and supported by heavy timber and iron. A great cloud of dust envelopes us, the light grows dull in it.

"Dust is coming up this way, sir," says some one appearing before us suddenly like an apparition. "Let us turn back and go because it will take a little time for this to clear." More iron doors opening and shutting and we are in another section. The same jagged rocks, trolley lines, and a vague darkness ahead. It is disappointing to one who has thought of a gold mine as a place where glittering nuggets lie scattered about.

"Which is the gold ore?" A whitish line running along the rock is being pointed out

to me. It is not more impressive than metal heaped on roadside. I feel an admiration for the first human being who could connect this stone with gold. After the blasting, these portions have been left over because these are not worth the cost of removal. The sides are supported by heavy beams, piled up; some portions of the beam look crushed and flattened like a match box trodden upon; it is due to the pressure that the earth goes on exerting from above. In some places where the logs cannot stand the pressure circular iron bands hold the roof up. I recognize familiar objects in new roles, namely, old railway lines bent into large hoofs and fixed up here to bear the weight of the earth. From the bowels of the earth and back there!

As the lift seizes us and takes us upward I cannot help feeling proud of being a human being. The whole organization is a triumph of man's ingenuity and courage in the face of something which outsizes him and can often outwit him by defeating his calculations. The jagged walls of the tunnel which might close in any moment, the lift which might stick, the gas which might blow up, and a dozen other things—and against these man's

confidence in his machines and mathematics, and his stubbornness in getting out of the earth what he wants on his own terms . . .

Vague hints of daylight through the holes in the lift. We are approaching the top. When the lift comes to a stop I am quite happy to be back on good old surface.

* * *

Kolar :

KOLAR is rich in history. It was founded by the Gangas early in the Christian Era. In 1004 Kolar passed into the hands of Cholas, and in the next century the Hoysalas pushed the Cholas off Mysore territory, and Kolar came under the Hoysalas. In the fifteenth century Timme Gowda, given the title of Chikka Rayal, was authorised by the Vijayanagar king to repair the fort of Kolar. The Bijapur king next held the place, and in 1639 Shaji, father of Shivaji, became the governor of this district, and half a century later the Mughals took it. Fatte Muhamud, father of Haidar Ali became Faujdar of Kolar under the Subedar of Sira. Kolar was ceded to Haidar Ali in 1761, changed hands once again and was finally restored to Tipu in 1792.

Buchanan who travelled in these parts in

the early part of nineteenth century gives us a fairly good idea of the place in those days. Kolar was surrounded by a large mud fort, the town had 700 houses, many of which were inhabited by weavers. On the top of the hill were four small villages having their own fields, gardens, and tanks. At Antara Ganga there was an annual assemblage of about 10,000 persons. The villages round about were generally surrounded by small fortifications for protection against Bedars who, professing to be servants of the Palegar in the neighbourhood, invaded the villages at night and committed robbery. Whenever such persons were seen, signal was given by the sentry in the watch tower and the robbers were fired on.

Today Kolar is a prosperous town. On every side there are signs of development and growth, and no effort is being spared to make the life of the ryot profitable and happy.

About two miles from the town is situated a fine sweep of hills called Kolar Betta or Satasringa Parvatha; the highest point rises to a height of 4,000 feet above sea level. On the east side of the hill is a perennial spring named Antara Ganga; the water issues from the mouth of stones resembling Basava and

is held to be sacred. This is believed to be the scene of Renuka's *sati* and Parasurama's vow.

Mulbagal :

EIGHTEEN miles from Kolar. It is known as the eastern gate because it is on the road to Tirupati. Pilgrims to Tirupati go through a preliminary ceremony of shaving, and bathing in Narasimha Tirtha before proceeding further. There is an interesting tomb of a Mohammedan saint called Haider Wali, which attracts a large number of pilgrims during the annual celebrations. Four miles from Mulbagal is Kudu-male at the foot of which are the ruins of large temples, the most prominent of them being those of Someswara and Ganesa. The sculptures in these are attributed to Jakanachari. The gods, it is said, going to make war on Tripura assembled their forces on this hill, and hence its name : the Hill of Assembly. Another village in this taluk which is of great antiquity is Avani, about eight miles from Mulbagal. It is identified to be Avantika, one of the ten sacred places in India. It is believed that Valmiki, the author of *Ramayana*, lived here; Rama on

his way back from Lanka remained here for some time; Sita after she had been banished came here and gave birth to her twin sons, Lava and Kusa, who were protected by Valmiki and brought up. There are many temples here dedicated to various personages in *Ramayana*.

Nandi Hills:

THIS is a popular summer resort in the west of the district. The summit is over 4,000 feet in height. Sir Mark Cubbon was responsible for making the place habitable and popular. The first few houses were built in his time. There is a temple of Sacred Bull on top, known as Yoga Nandiswara and another known as Boga Nandiswara at the village of Nandi down below. Both these temples are of great architectural beauty and have been in existence since the time of Cholas, Pallavas, and Hoysalas. Around the summit are ruins of fortifications erected by Haidar and Tipu. This stronghold was taken in 1791 by the army under Lord Cornwallis. Major Wilks gives an interesting account of this attack:

" . . . Its defence was committed to Latf Ali Beg, an officer who had always merited

the highest distinction both from Haidar and Tipu. There was no choice with regard to the face to be attacked, because except on the west the precipice was inaccessible. That point had been strengthened by a double line of ramparts, and the foundation was laid for a third which ultimately aided the assailants in forming their last lodgement . . . .

"The assault was given by clear moonlight on the morning of the 19th of October; the arrangements of defence were excellent and particularly the masses of granite reserved till this period to be rolled down the rock with tremendous effect, but the lodgement was within one hundred yards of the breach, and although the garrison was perfectly alert, the ardour and the rapidity of the assailants surmounted every obstacle, and they pressed the fugitives so closely as to prevent their effectually barricading the gate of the inner rampart. It was forced after a sharp conflict, and the place was carried with the loss in the assault of only thirty killed and wounded, chiefly by the stones tumbled down the rock, and in the whole siege one hundred and twenty."

Bangalore

A HUNTER was separated from his companions. Night came on suddenly. He was alone and very tired. Knowing that his horse must be equally tired, he dismounted and tramped along. His hand was on his sword, for the jackals were howling and vague forest sounds came out of the darkness. A few hours later he sighted a small hut. An old woman opened the door when he knocked.

"I have lost my way, mother, and I shall be glad to have something to eat and something for my horse too."

"You look a nobleman, sir, and what should I have fit for you to eat?"

"I am hungry. I will eat anything."

"I have a bean field behind my house, and it has yielded me a plentiful crop this year. I sell most of it and keep a little, boiled, for my food. If your taste permits it, all the beans in my pot is yours." She placed a plateful of beans before him, and he ate it with relish; fed his horse also on it; and spent the night in the hut.

It was later learnt that this visitor was the king himself, and it caused such a sensation that the place came to be known as the Town of Boiled Beans (Bengaluru).

When we emerge from the mists of tradition and enter history we learn that Kempe Gowda I built the town in 1537 A.D. and constructed a mud fort around it. He saw a great future for this town and fixed points in the four directions, marking the limits to which it would grow in future. At these points he built watch towers: the tower on the north is near Hebbal rifle range, the eastern one is on a rock near Halsur, the southern tower is on a rock in Lal Bagh, and the western on the bund of Kempambudi Tank.

An astrologer watched for an auspicious conjunction of the stars and fixed a day on which Kempe Gowda took a plough and marked with it two streets, one running east to west (somewhere near Ulsoor Gate to Railway Goods-shed) and the other running north to south (from Yelahanka Gate near the University buildings to the fort in the south). Temples were built at the northern end of the fort, one for Vinayaka who brings luck, and one for

Anjaneya who gives power and protection. Besides these Kempe Gowda built the famous Bull Temple and various other temples in Gavipuram.

The fort remained unchanged till about the first year of Haidar Ali's reign, when it was enlarged and rebuilt with stone. The fort was oval in shape with round towers at intervals, and the northern one, called the Delhi Gate, was a handsome structure, a fine specimen of Mohammedan military architecture. Within the fort the most important building was the palace.

The fort was restored to Tipu in 1792, but he dismantled it; seven years later Purnaiya had it completely restored. Later, some of the British troops had their quarters in it. In 1831 some administrative departments were accommodated in the palace, where they remained till 1868, when the public offices in Cubbon Park were completed. The Municipal Office was also in the fort. The fort was handed over to the civil authorities on 2nd October 1888. Later the old walls were all demolished and the moat was filled up. The Victoria Hospital, the Minto Ophthalmic Hospital, and Doddanna Industrial School, mark the

site of the old fort walls. Only an old gateway remains, where is located the Disinfection Stores. A part of Tipu's Palace is at present used as the Headquarters of the Mysore Boy Scouts.

* * * *

Bangalore has an air of great bustle and activity, with its diverse population. In any big road, apart from the Bangaloreans themselves, it is always possible to pick out men of other provinces—the South Canara man, the Bombay merchant, the cooly from Telugu and Tamil land, the long-shirted Bengalee, the Parsee, and the Sikh driving a military lorry. It almost looks as if Bangalore were a junction of all the provinces in India. It has about half a dozen first class textile mills, and a number of factories, not to speak of the manufacturing concerns managed or owned by the Government. Consequently, there is a pressure of population, which has led to the growth of extensions. The one that is most actively growing today is in the north, Malleswaram, which though created in 1898 is still growing. Here residential buildings are cropping up almost overnight and going on to the very edge of Yesvantpur, which is the next

station on the railway. If anyone wants to select a pattern for a house, which is simple and healthy and capable of shutting out the burglar but not light or air, he will do well to walk along some of the cross roads in Malleswaram or in Gandhi Nagar, where some of the newest buildings are to be seen. Comparatively less recent buildings are to be seen in Chamarajpet, west of the fort, which was laid out in 1892. Basavangudi, south of the fort, was begun in 1898-99, after the Great Plague. For a connoiseur in buildings here is ample variety. The same simple design combined with utility and strength is also noticeable in some of the public buildings: the Technological Institute, the Vani Vilas Hospital, the Mental Hospital, and the Telephone Exchange. Among the older buildings, which are a great deal responsible for the personality of Bangalore, must be mentioned the Secretariat, red, vast, the very picture of efficiency and work, in whose cool corridors one can walk nearly half a mile; the Central College which has been in existence since 1858, with its spires and turrets; the Victoria Hospital and the Ophthalmic Hospital, sturdy business-like

buildings. For another type of building, grand, manorial, and remote, we must walk around the Race Course. Here are castles, out of sight, far beyond curving drives, set in parks and gardens.

There is also a thrill in threading one's way through the old city. The Dodpet running north to south is intersected by Chickpet going east to west. And here we have closely packed houses, abutting shop fronts, narrow winding roads, and a perfect jam of pedestrians and vehicles; and behind all this a dizzying net-work of lanes and by-lanes. The Municipality has a great deal to do here. It should be an up-hill task for any municipality to push back the projecting facades, straighten the roads which have been wriggling for ages, and clear away choking, vermin-breeding buildings. All this is in the programme of the Municipality, which is not wanting in vision or energy.

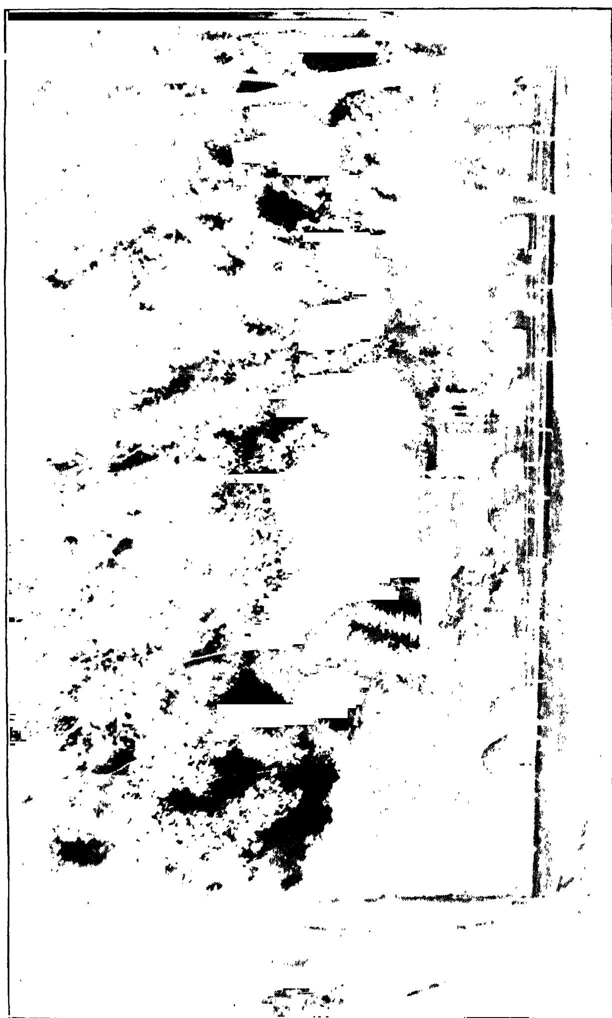
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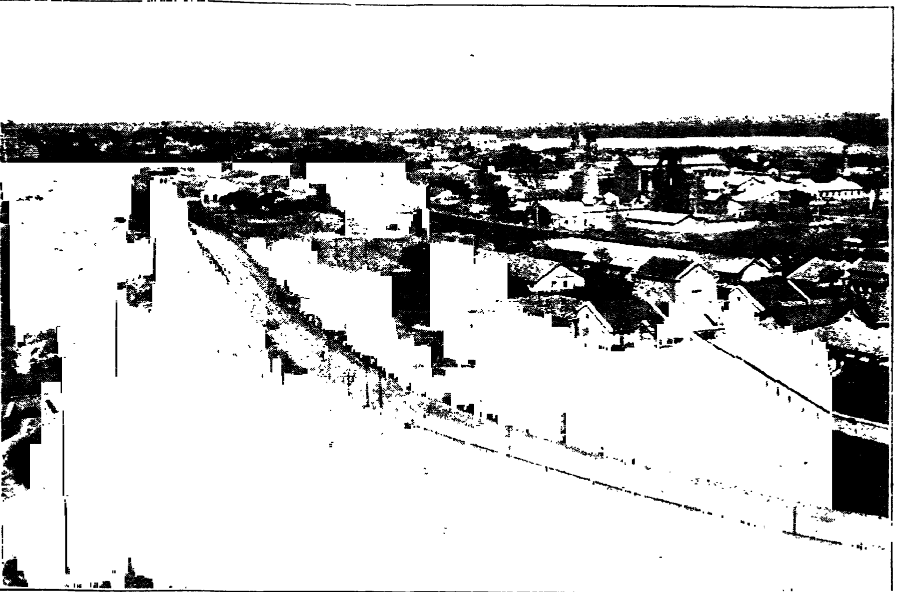
All important roads tarred and their junctions formed into squares and circles, ugly trees cut away, and night time lit up by ornamental lamps,—Bangalore maintains a beauty and cleanliness which makes it

difficult for any one to believe that it is a town of mills and crowds. Of a morning I have seen few sights anywhere to compare with the loveliness of Margosa Avenue in Malleswaram or the Avenue Road in Chamarajpet; nor anything so bracing as a walk in the garden paths of Cubbon Park or Lal Bagh.

The atmosphere about Bangalore is one of intense practicality. The institutions which are mainly responsible for this atmosphere are: the Central College, which gives us our scientists, the Engineering College, the Indian Institute of Science where young men are engaged night and day in catching under their microscopes or in their test tubes the secrets of energy and matter. We see the application of scientific knowledge and the utilization of natural resources in the famous Government Soap Factory, in the Industrial and Testing Laboratory, in the Electric Factory, and in the Porcelain Factory.

The amenities that Bangalore provides for its citizens are great. The Victoria Hospital for general ailments, the Minto Ophthalmic Hospital, the Vani Vilas Maternity Hospital, which is the second largest





K.G.F.—AN AERIAL VIEW OF OORGAUM GOLD FIELD.

women's hospital in India, and the Mental Hospital, which has discredited the old picture of bedlam, where mental aberrations are tackled with the resources of the latest medicine and psychology.

Around Bangalore

Closepet:

In his speech at the Java Conference Sir Mirza Ismail said: "In speaking on this vast subject of rural hygiene, it is impossible not to refer, however briefly, to the difficult problem that confronts India, as it does, I think, many other countries of Asia. I refer to the low economic condition of our peoples. It is difficult for countries, circumstances as they are, to grapple successfully with disease. So long as such a low economic standard persists and devitalises the people, progress in combating social and health evils cannot be either rapid or enduring. No government can afford to neglect such a problem, and the sooner some solution is found for it the greater the reward they will reap in the happiness and contentment of their people."

We see an expression of this conviction here at Closepet (30 miles from Bangalore). It has a Rural Welfare Centre which works in conjunction with the Rural Health Centre which was started in 1936 and has been

actively engaged in doing intensive work in an area of 113 square miles. The area is divided into five divisions each placed under a sanitary inspector, a public health nurse, a vaccinator, and two midwives. The sanitary inspector conducts house-to-house survey in his area and is up-to-date with facts and figures; checks births and deaths registers in villages under his jurisdiction, investigates the causes of deaths, takes steps to control communicable diseases or epidemics; chlorinates water supply and disinfects houses when necessary; assists in school health work; and above all organizes Health Leagues in villages which are to foster the principles of health and sanitation in every home in the village. The public health nurses and midwives are chiefly engaged in pre-natal, maternity, and child welfare work.

Closely working in association with the Health Centre is the Rural Welfare Centre. "The object of the Centre is to carry out intensive work for improving the existing conditions of rural life and economy by concentrating attention in compact groups of villages. Such work consists mainly in introducing the results of the experiments that have already been tried out by the

several development departments; in disseminating information and in carrying such improved methods to the door of the agriculturists. With a view to enlisting the live interest of the people in such work, experiments and demonstrations are being carried out in the village itself, and, as far as possible, with the co-operation of the raiyats themselves and on their own lands."

Magadi :

ABOUT 29 miles from Bangalore. According to tradition it was founded in 1139 by a Chola king. It was here that Immadi Kempe Gowda of Bangalore had his capital after he had been ousted from Bangalore. It has a small ruined fort in which there is a temple of Rameswara, Kempe Gowda's family God. Nearby are seen the ruins of his palace.

About 7 miles from here is Savandurga, a great mass of granite 4,000 feet high, with a base circumference of 8 miles, culminating in two peaks separated by a chasm. It is said to have been fortified in 1543 by Samantharaya, an officer appointed by the Vijayanagar kings for this district. With a large force he stayed here, and perhaps,

inspired by the impregnable nature of his position, made himself independent. He ruled for 28 years and was succeeded by his son, who ruled for 17 years. After him came Chikkaraya, who ruled for 16 years. Well might he have continued and passed the reign on to his descendants but for a sudden fit of madness in which he threw himself down the chasm between the two peaks. Now the fort being without a leader the headman of a nearby village seized and plundered it. Immadi Kempe Gowda marched against him, put him to death, and acquired the stronghold. His descendants held it till 1728 when the Mysore general captured it and took the last of the Kempe Gowda line to Seringapatam as prisoner where he died.

Devanahalli :

ABOUT 23 miles from Bangalore, a neat village, where Tipu Sultan was born, and where Haidar Ali first distinguished himself as a soldier.

About the year 1501 Malla Baire Gowda built a fort and conferred the government on his brother, Sanna Baire Gowda. He reigned for 40 years, and then his son for

25 years. It was in the end besieged by the Mysore Army under Nanjaraj for 8 months and fell in 1748. In this siege Haidar Ali, a volunteer horseman, displayed remarkable daring and strategy. In the west of the fort the site of Haidar's house is still pointed out by the local people.

A Battle-Field

ABOUT nine miles from Mysore the great river Kaveri divides into two branches which meet again about three miles further down; and these parted arms enclose a space of land known as Seringapatam. This island was covered with jungles when sage Gautama came and settled here a few thousand years ago. In 894 A. D. a person named Tirumlaiya built a temple for Ranganatha and called the place Sri Ranga Pura. Nearly three centuries later it became one of the eight townships on the banks of Kaveri assigned by Vishnuvardhana to his *guru* Ramanujacharya. Still three centuries later one Timmanna visited Vijayanagar and obtained permission to build a fort around the island. He had discovered a hidden treasure and he used it for constructing the fort; he also improved the temple of Ranganatha with the stone and materials he had secured from the destruction of 101 Jain temples in a nearby town.

A temple, a fort, and a town coming up—

this was the pioneering work for which, as it seems, some one had been waiting. For the island left alone for so many centuries to its river-washed existence now briskly changed hands, in less than half a century. An old inscription tells us that Narasa, founder of the second Vijayanagar dynasty, "quickly damming up the Kaveri when in full flood, crossed over and captured the enemy alive in a battle. Taking possession of their kingdom, he made the ancient Srirangapatna his own." This is perhaps the first, though faint, martial sound to reach our ears, a sound to be heard increasingly for well over four hundred years on this island. There are few places where history has been so 'red in tooth and claw' as here, few places where the soil has been drenched so much in human blood.

This place was under the rule of the Viceroys of Vijayanagar, and from the last of them it passed on to Raja Wodeyar, the rising ruler of Mysore. Following an engagement at Talkad, which ended in the death of the Viceroy and of his wife, Raja Wodeyar made Seringapatam his capital. In 1638 it was besieged by the Bijapur forces, which Kantirava Narasaraj met and repulsed after

immense slaughter; later Sivappa Nayak of Bednur besieged it and was beaten off; nearly at the end of the century the Mahrattas fell on it, and such of the few as could carry themselves back intact did so, but the majority left their bones to bleach on the sands of Kaveri; in 1732 the Nawab of Arcot sent a powerful army against Seringapatam; in 1735 the Subedar of Deccan marched on it with the aid of a French Force, and peace was purchased for 56 lakhs. "The treasury being empty, one-third was raised on the plate and jewels of the Hindu temples and the property and ornaments of the Raja, and for the remainder bills were given, which, however, were never redeemed." In 1757 and 1759 the Mahrattas came and harassed, and during their second visit the defence was entirely in the hands of Haidar Ali, a cavalryman at one time, now risen to high command by sheer merit. After this the most memorable sieges were by the British in 1792 and 1799 in the reign of Tipu Sultan.

In 1792 the attack was led by Lord Cornwallis. On the 5th of February he encamped within a short distance of Seringapatam. The Sultan who had made every

preparation for the defence had an encampment on the north bank of the river. At about eight o' clock on the 6th when the moon was shining on the flowing Kaveri, the British force, formed into three columns, marched on in dead silence; the centre column was under the command of Lord Cornwallis himself. This was rather a surprise to Tipu, who thought that Lord Cornwallis would wait for the arrival of General Abercromby's army which was then at Periyapatna. At about eleven o'clock the head of the centre column was seen by the advance cavalry of Tipu. When the column reached the edge of the north bank it was received with heavy fire, but it pressed on, making a way through with bayonets. Thus one party gained the south bank; another party soon followed and occupied the suburb on the east, Shahar Ganjam. By about 1 p. m. various other parties pressed on and occupied positions of vantage in different parts of the island. The whole of next day the Sultan made a most determined effort to beat back the English but he did not succeed. About the 16th Abercromby's army and a Mahratta contingent joined the British force.

On the 24th the allied troops, eagerly waiting to take the fort, received an intimation that negotiations for peace were going on and that all the trench works were to be stopped forthwith. Tipu was given the following terms of peace: he was to give up half the dominions he possessed before the war, pay an indemnity of three crores and thirty lakhs, release all the prisoners kept since the time of his father, and deliver to the English two of his sons as hostages.

The scene on the 26th harrowed all the onlookers The two sons, aged eight and ten, were being sent to the British camp. The fort walls were crowded with soldiers and citizens, who watched in utter silence as the richly caparisoned elephants bearing the hostages neared the gateway. Tipu himself stood on the bastion above the main entrance and watched his sons go. He did not utter a word to any one, afraid lest he should break down.

As the elephants emerged from the fort gate a salute of guns was fired by the artillery at Seringapatam, and as they approached the British lines, a salute was fired there too. They were met half way and conducted under a guard of honour. The

procession was a gorgeous one, led by camels and seven standard bearers and followed by a hundred pikemen carrying silver-inlaid spears. The princes were received by the troops presenting arms and officers saluting. Lord Cornwallis received them at the entrance to his tent with an embrace. Gulam Ali who had to conduct the actual surrendering of the hostages said: "These children were till this morning the sons of my master. Their situation is now changed and they must look up to your lordship as their father."

We get an idea of Seringapatam of this time from a description given by Major Dirom, who was an officer in the army: "The fort and outworks occupy about a mile of the west end of the island, and the Lal Bagh or garden about the same portion of the east end. The whole space between the fort and the Lal Bagh, except a small inclosure, called the Daulat Bagh, on the north bank near the fort, was filled, before the war, with houses, and formed an extensive suburb, of which the pettah of Shahar Ganjam is the only remaining part, the rest having been destroyed by Tipu to make room for batteries to defend the

island, and to form an esplanade to the fort. This pettah or town of modern structure built on the middle and highest part of the island, is about half a mile square, divided into regular cross streets, all wide, shaded on each side by trees, and full of good houses. It is surrounded by a strong mud wall, and seemed to have been preserved for the accommodation of the bazaar people and merchants and for the convenience of troops stationed in that part of the island for its defence. A little way to the eastward of the pettah is the entrance into the great garden of Lal Bagh. It was laid out in regular shady walks of large cypress-trees, and full of fruit trees, flowers and vegetables of every description. The fort, thus situated on the west end of the island, is distinguished by its white walls, regular outworks, magnificent buildings and ancient Hindu pagodas, contrasted with the more lofty and splendid monuments lately raised in honour of the Mohammedan faith. The Lal Bagh, which occupies the east end of the island, possessing all the beauty and convenience of a country retirement, is dignified by the mausoleum of Haidar, and a superb new palace built by Tipu. To

these add the idea of an extensive suburb or town, which filled the middle space between the fort and the garden full of wealthy industrious inhabitants, and it will be readily allowed that this insulated metropolis must have been the richest, most convenient and beautiful spot possessed in the present age by any native prince in India."

The siege of 1799 was under the command of General Harris. Tipu in the interval between the previous siege and this had greatly strengthened the fortifications. Double ditches were added to the walls, creating something of a fortress within fortress. General Harris arrived before Seringapatam on the 5th of April after defeating Tipu at Malavalli. In the improved defence scheme there was a new line of intrenchment on the south of the fort from the Daulat Bagh to Periyapatna bridge, about seven hundred yards from the fort, and Tipu's infantry were placed between these works and the river.

General Stuart joined the main army on the 14th. The regular siege commenced from the 17th. The first attack was to be at the western angle across the river.

On the 27th the Mysore army was driven

from the last boundary of outer defence. On the morning of 2nd May the guns on the British side kept up a continuous fire, and formed a breach. By the evening the breach had greatly enlarged. On the next day the breach was reported negotiable. One p.m. on the 4th was fixed for the assault under the command of General Baird with a body of troops numbering 4,376. Before daybreak they had taken their stand in the trenches with scaling ladders and other implements. At one o'clock precisely Baird stepped forward from the trenches in full view of both the armies, flourishing his sword, calling upon his men to follow him. In less than seven minutes the British flag was planted on the summit of the breach.

Since the siege began Tipu had been living in a small tent on the south of the fort directing the operations of his troops. On the opening of the British batteries, he moved from this exposed position to an apartment formed by an old gateway leading to the river on the north. The troops on duty inside the fort numbered 13,750. He had assigned the general charge of the angle attacked to Sayyed Sahib, his father-in-law,

who was to be assisted by Sayyed Gaffur, who was formerly an officer in the British service. The Sultan's son with the whole of the cavalry assisted by Purnaiya was detailed to face and parry the northern attack and was encamped at Karighatta. His second son commanded the Mysore Gate on the southern side of the fort. His most trusted, and dependable commander of the light cavalry, Kamruddin, with a body of 4,000 troops, was out to dam up and destroy the flow of supplies and reinforcements to the enemy.

On the morning of the 4th Sayyed Gaffur came to the Sultan to say that he detected a great deal of activity in the British line and that he felt an assault might be coming any time now. Tipu replied that he didn't think anybody would dare to push on during the day. At about 9 o'clock Tipu proceeded to his palace, bathed and gave alms to mendicants. He returned to his gateway apartment at about midday and had just taken a mouthful of food when information was brought to him that the assault had commenced and that Sayyed Gaffur was killed. "Sayyed Gaffur was never afraid to die," he said, and

ordered another officer to take his place. He abandoned his food, washed his hands, and hurried towards the breach, along the northern rampart. Standing within two hundred yards of the breach he fired with his own hands at his assailants. Seeing that most of his men were lying dead or wounded and that the assailants were pressing on in overwhelming numbers, he retired along the rampart. He was slightly wounded. He met a favourite horse of his, mounted it and proceeded towards a gateway leading to the inner fortress. It was the most eastern of the sally ports, and as Tipu was coming in he was mixed up with a panic-stricken and fleeing crowd of soldiers and citizens who were trying to reach the river and ford it. The assailants poured in fire here. His horse fell dead and he received a wound in the chest. He was half fainting when his attendants placed him on the edge of a palanquin. The dead and the wounded lay in high mounds, with their clothes catching fire from the paper of the cartridges. The palanquin on which the fainting Sultan was placed was kept near an archway. He managed to wriggle out of it and half his body was submerged in the debris of dead

bodies. As he lay there helplessly, a soldier was attracted by the jewelled sword belt of the Sultan and tried to take it, but the Sultan seized his sword and with a final effort slashed his leg; whereupon the soldier raised his musket and shot him through the temple.

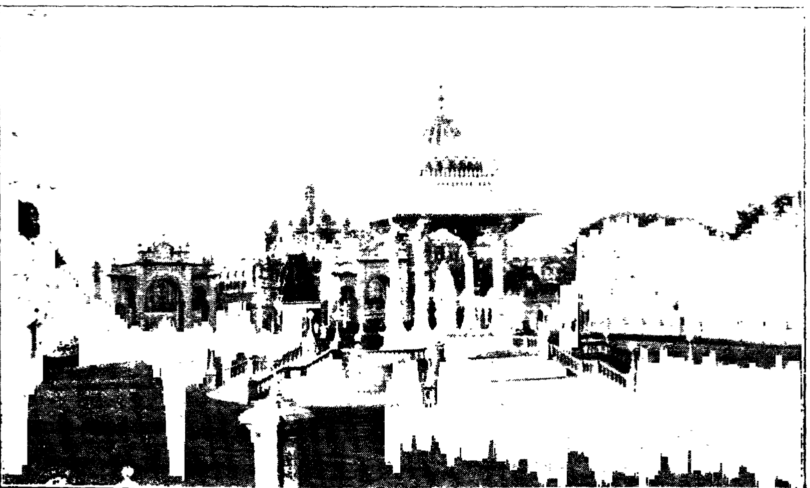
Hours later a search was made for his body. By the glimmering light of a torch it was found late at night (over 11,000 bodies were found floating in the moats and under the debris) and placed in a palanquin. His turban had rolled off; an amulet was tied round his arm; and a tiny copy of Koran in a silver case was found nearby. He was more identified by the crimson cloth round his waist and his pouch with red and green tassel than by his features. His body was taken to the palace and next day buried with military honours beside his father's at Lal Bagh.

* * * *

There is something melancholy about a deserted drama hall. The vacant stage, the extinguished lamp, the dusty curtains and the scenes, have a touch of gloom about them. I get the same feeling when I go to Seringapatam and walk about. Here, in

front of the railway which cuts through the western portion of the fort, are the Garrison Hospital, and the Breach, with a simple monument over it, and there the dungeon in which many a prisoner of war spent his dismal hours; and the grass-covered piece of ground shows us where Tipu's palace once stood. Beyond it the Water Gate where he had his camp during the siege, and that fenced-off piece of ground further up is the spot where he fell. Outside the fort the Daria Daulat, the summer palace set in an exquisite garden on the river bank, built in 1784 by Tipu. At the eastern end of the island is the Gumbaz where Tipu lies with his parents. On the south of the Daria Daulat is a small monument to the memory of the fallen officers in the final siege; and then the Garrison Cemetery opened in 1800, where lies many a soldier. Here we see a tombstone on which is inscribed the name of Mrs. Scott . . . . . She was the wife of Colonel Scott who was in charge of a gun factory at Ganjam, and they lived with their child in a bungalow built for them by the Maharaja. One April morning, Colonel Scott left for French Rocks on inspection duty, and when he

returned, he found his wife and child dead. They had succumbed to a sudden attack of cholera and their bodies were laid out on the bed. On seeing this Colonel Scott is said to have drowned himself in the Kaveri, which borders his garden. The last portion of this story is usually doubted, but the people of this place are afraid to visit the bungalow after nightfall believing that Colonel Scott comes up from the river at night and joins his wife and child in the bungalow. It looks, no doubt, haunted. In fact the whole island has a haunted appearance, with its countless monuments, tombs, and cemeteries; and with its bungalows and palaces tenanted only by caretakers, where once must have resided some distinguished soldier, sultan, or administrator.



MYSORE—STATUE SQUARE.



MYSORE—THE NISHAD BAGH OR "PLEASURE GARDENS."

Mysore

Mr. M. A. Sreenivasan was till recently the President of Mysore Municipality. The present city owes its distinctive features to Mr. Sreenivasan's insight into its problems and his energy in tackling them. On every side we have been seeing something new and something definite: a clean and bright Market; *Santhepet*, the business centre, saved from choking itself and shifted to the north of the town—a colossal scheme this; owners of cattle given a new colony where both they and their animals could live without ruining each others surroundings; a drastic scheme of slum clearance and housing; and so on and on. The list is extensive. Considering its scope and extent, any one item could well be counted as an achievement in, what might be called, a municipal life-time, but Mr. Sreenivasan found it possible to get through all this work in about five years. He has created a new standard of speed and variety in municipal work.

I am grateful to Mr. Sreenivasan for permitting me to use his article.

India's Most Beautiful City

By Mr. M. A. Sreenivasan, B.A., Mysore Civil Service

It is so customary in our ancient land for every zealous Municipal Council and the citizens to refer, in their civic addresses and the like, to "our historic and beautiful City" that one feels a certain hesitation in applying that phrase to a City so truly historic and so truly beautiful as Mysore. I shall content myself therefore by pointing out that, apart from its associations with hallowed epic and tradition, Mysore was, as a matter of history, known as the seat of the Kingdom of Mahishamandala during the reign of the Emperor Asoka as far back as the 3rd century before Christ. Records and inscriptions of the 8th and 10th centuries found in and around the City make clear references to the "Mysore Nadu of 70" (villages) and to the town which was its capital.

So much for its historicity. As for its beauty, I would cordially invite the reader

to come and see it for himself or herself; and the more widely travelled he or she is, and the more of other cities and towns he or she has seen, the better.

For here, indeed, has the loveliness of nature been happily adorned by man and a beautiful City has been built on the very spot whose charm of hill and lake, of pleasant meadow and enchanting grove, captivated the hearts, centuries ago, of brave Yaduraya and Krishnaraya, two young Rajput brothers who came, saw and were conquered, and remained to found the Mysore Kingdom.

The City, though old, is yet new in its present form. The ancient, small and congested fort town has been transformed beyond recognition. I myself have dim recollections of the narrow and congested streets in the Fort, in front of the Palace, then still under construction, where the perfume of the famous Mysore jasmine in the flower bazaars held successful sway over the odours of the drains and lanes. Since those days the change has been both rapid and marvellous. The entire congestion in front of the Palace has been removed. Many slum areas have been cleared and

broad new roads and pleasant parks have been opened. Several new and salubrious extensions have been laid out. The old Purnaiya's Nalla has been transformed into the noble thoroughfare and fashionable shopping centre known today as the Sayaji Rao Road.

Magnificent Buildings:

THE City is adorned with many magnificent buildings. The Palace stands like a jewel in the centre of the City in a setting of lovely parks and noble squares and avenues, with its tall golden dome pointing heavenward, ruby-crowned by night. It is a veritable treasure house of Hoysala architecture and Indian art. The Jagan Mohan Palace, the Lokaranjan Mahal, the Lalitha Mahal, the Mansions of the Princesses, the Palace Office, the Municipal Office, the old Public Office and the new Railway Office, the Krishnarajendra Hospital and the new Exhibition building and the still newer Cheluvamba Hospital, are examples of elegant and noble edifices which represent a variety, and sometimes a new and striking synthesis of architectural *motif* and æsthetic conception.

The City's electric lighting is perhaps the

most impressive in all India. From many miles away the traveller to Mysore, be he visitor or resident, is thrilled by the sight of the lights on the Chamundi Hill which sparkle like a diadem and beckon him a royal welcome. By night the whole City glitters like a jewel, and a poet who saw it one bright and starry night from the Chamundi Hill felt even more entranced by the firmament below than by the firmament above! Flood lights illumine some of the stateliest domes and towers: and the graceful lamps under the avenues, and in the boulevards and parks, the beautiful fountain illuminated by lights of different colours that change from harmony to harmony, the floodlit beds of red or golden cannas, the impressive pillars of light and the blue and red neon signs on the theatres and shops, all these make the whole scene a thing not of this earth—a fairy place and a dream.

The Zoological Gardens are considered the best in India, and the Palace Stables are of great interest both for the many fine and noble animals they contain and the way these animals are kept and looked after. In the Chamarajendra Technical Institute, the arts and crafts of Mysore are not only

preserved but taught and developed, and the Institute's Show Rooms are a treat to the lover of beauty and good taste. There is a fine collection of paintings, old and new, in the Art Gallery at the Jagan Mohan Palace. No lover of our ancient lore could fail to derive a certain peace and inspiration from breathing the hallowed, if musty, atmosphere of the palmyra manuscripts in the famous Oriental Library, the Library which gave Kautilya's 'Arthasasthra' to the world. The many Colleges and buildings of the Mysore University command a special dignity and reverence from the fact that Mysore was the seat of a University as far back as the 12th century. The Chamarajendra Sanskrit College is famed as a seat of ancient learning. The Krishnarajendra Hospital and the new Cheluvamba Maternity Hospital are two of the finest hospitals in India and the Princess Krishnajammanni Sanatorium is considered unexcelled in all India by many competent observers.

The Cleanest City :

MYSORE takes a special pride in being regarded by competent and well-travelled observers as the cleanest city in India. The

expenditure *per capita* on sanitation and conservancy in Mysore City is more than that of any other city in India. Besides, the large and well-equipped hospitals to which reference has already been made, there is a big Ayurvedic Hospital and a Unani Hospital with beds for in-patients, and several smaller dispensaries, ayurvedic and unani and allopathic, to cater for the medical needs of the citizens. In welfare work generally and in maternity and infant welfare and anti-tuberculosis work in particular, the City has led the way and won coveted laurels. It has seven maternity and child welfare centres where anté-natal and post-natal clinics are held and mothers are advised, babies are weighed and given oil-baths, milk, tomato juice, and cod-liver oil, under the care and supervision of expert doctors and nurses. The Solaria in the City, where rickety children are given sun-baths to help them fight tuberculosis and other maladies, have earned the praise of no less distinguished a critic than Major General Bradfield, who held these as model for other cities in India.

By demolishing slums and clearing congestion and over-crowding, by building new

"agraharas" of cheap, comfortable and sanitary homes for the dis-housed and the poor, by the laying out of wide and airy extensions and lung spaces, by the creation of parks and play-fields, by tarring the roads and mitigating the dust nuisance, by measures such as the "Gokulam Scheme" for the satisfactory colonisation of professional milk-vendors and their cattle, and in many other ways the City has made and is making the most strenuous efforts to fight tuberculosis and other illness, and to improve the health and well-being of its citizens. It is no wonder that jealous of its laurels—Mysore City has won the Sir Hassan Suhrawardy Shield for the best anti-tuberculosis work in India—the City responded most enthusiastically to Her Excellency the Marchioness of Linlithgows' call on behalf of the King-Emperor's Anti-Tuberculosis Fund.

Private Philanthropy :

I COULD name twenty institutions and organisations—schools for the deaf and the blind, and nursery schools, ladies' clubs and institutions for women's education and training, the Anathalaya, the Pinjrapole

and so on,—largely sustained by private philanthropy, where wonderful service is rendered by devoted and self-less workers. The question naturally springs up to one's mind "How is all this made possible? Wherefrom does all this work derive its inspiration and sustenance?"

It springs from a deep faith in the ancient *Dharma* which is a treasured heritage of the Mysore people and of which Mysore's noble Ruler is the true embodiment. His Highness the Maharaja's personal benefactions and gifts to the people, particularly of Mysore City, are many and manifold. The latest are a gift of one lakh of rupees for the new Cheluvamba Maternity Hospital and of Rs. 10,000 for the new Cheluvamba Park. Over a hundred and twenty small homes for the poor have been built out of a fund graciously endowed by His Highness the Maharaja and His Highness the Yuvaraja. Many beautiful gardens and boulevards maintained by the Palace are open to Mysore's fortunate citizens.

The debt that modern Mysore owes to Sir Mirza Ismail, the Dewan, is incalculable. His passion for the building up and improvement of Mysore City is equalled only by

his devotion to the City with every detail of whose growth and fulfilment, large or minute, he has been in active association during the past quarter of a century. Only those that have been privileged to serve the City can catch glimpses of the constant thought, the indefatigable earnestness and the tremendous driving power that has made the City what it is today. His notes of inspection and his instructions relating to the City range from the biggest schemes to the minutest details. A compilation of these even over the past decade would make a big and interesting volume, which would not only embody the progress of the City during the period but would also make an illuminating study in town-planning and civic improvement. One of his favourite remarks that he is "an enemy of loose stones" is expressive of his general dislike of dirt and neglect, and of his passion for tidiness and orderliness. I believe it was another great creative artist, Robert Louis Stevenson, who sighed "O for the greatest of all arts—the art to omit! I would I knew that art! A man who knew that art would make an Iliad of a daily newspaper!" One feels inclined to add—Yes, and make beautiful cities out of

agglomerations of congested dwellings and dirty streets.

Slum Clearance :

YET, with all its beauty and its cleanliness, the City is still far from the ideal which all lovers of Mysore and all those who serve the City have set before themselves and are striving to attain. And no one is more intimately conscious than they of its imperfections and its dark spots, of the congested and slummy quarters that still disfigure its loveliness like so many ugly blotches, of the unsewered drains that run like tears down its beautiful face. Both the Municipal Council and the City Improvement Trust Board, with the generous support of the Government, have made a real beginning in slum clearance, and in re-housing, but only the fringe of the problem has been touched and a vast deal remains to be done. The City's drainage system is being constantly extended and improved, but all this extension and improvement has not been able to keep pace with the rapid growth of the City and its extensions. The same must be said of the problem of housing over 12,000 head of cattle in the City, many of which

are at present kept in congested and insanitary conditions or neglected altogether and allowed to roam the conservancy lanes and eke out a sustenance from the contents of dust bins. The Gokulam scheme appears to offer a most hopeful line of approach to the solution of the cattle and the pure milk problem, but it has to be amplified a hundred-fold for it to be really effective.

A recent survey of beggary and vagrancy in the City has revealed that there were about 1,500 beggars in the City, of whom over 1,000 were able-bodied, and the problem of dealing satisfactorily and humanely with these unfortunate people awaits solution. The satisfactory housing of the City's primary schools in bright and well ventilated buildings has just been taken up and remains to be completed, and a scheme for the construction of a fine and up-to-date Stadium for the City is under consideration. Although some anti-malaria and anti-plague work is being done, a great and wholehearted drive against the mosquito and the rat remains one of the most important tasks to be undertaken. The war against small-pox and rabies, against tuberculosis and typhoid and venereal disease,

has to be greatly intensified and fiercely fought on all fronts. These many very difficult tasks that lie ahead, however, do not dam but serve only to stimulate the authorities and the citizens of the City who, with the blessings of Providence and their beloved Ruler and the help and guidance of His Highness' Government, are determined to go bravely forward with their tasks and to make Mysore their own ideal City, and second to no other in the world.

Talakad :

AN ancient city on the left bank of Kaveri, about 28 miles from Mysore. The actual site of the old city is now under sand, stretching for nearly a mile : the sand billows crept on the town at the rate of nine or ten feet a year and before it the population retreated inland, and a new town is now in existence. The buried town is of great antiquity. More than thirty temples are under sand; the most important of them is Kirtinarayana's which is occasionally opened up with great difficulty during certain festivals. Only the tower over the inner shrine and the front portal are visible above the sand. It is a magnificent temple in Hoysala style. The deity of the temple, Narayana, is eight feet in height and stands on a pedestal. The outer corridor and the shrine of the Goddess are submerged in sand. There is a long inscription in Sanskrit which tells us that King Vishnuvardhana having routed Adiyaman, the Chola Viceroy, from Talakad, set up the God, Kirtinarayana, in 1117 A.D.

The only temple left unsubmerged is that of Vaidyeswara, built of granite in the Dravidian style. Facing east, it has a beautifully sculptured outer wall. The temple has figures of the Gods in Shiva's family. On the central ceiling in the hall are represented various aspects and acts of Shiva. There are two stone images in front of the temple of the brothers Tala and Kadu, two brothers from whom this place derives its name. The brothers one day saw in the forest a tree being worshipped by wild elephants. Stirred by curiosity they began to cut down the tree. From the wound inflicted by the axe flowed blood, and peering through the cut they saw a *lingham* within the tree. A voice commanded them to dress the wound with the leaves of the tree, whereupon there was a flow of milk instead of blood. They drank the milk and were transformed into celestial beings; the elephants (which were sages in transformation) also drank the milk and were transported to Kailasa; and the place became known as Talakad. The temple is dedicated to Vaidyeswara, that is Iswara who has the medicament.

The sandy deluge was caused by a

woman's curse when the place was conquered by a Mysore Raja in 1634. Tirumal Raya, the representative of the Vijayanagar court at Seringapatam, fell ill seriously, and came to Talakad in order to seek relief by performing certain rites at the shrine of Vaidyeswara. His wife, Rangamma, was in charge of the government at Seringapatam in his absence. One day she heard that her husband's condition had become worse and hastened to his side, handing over Seringapatam and its dependencies to Raja Wodeyar, the Mysore ruler. So far there seems to be dependable history; beyond this there is much vague and fantastic legend. It is said that there was in the possession of the Rani a rare bit of jewellery, which was much coveted by Raja Wodeyar. He gathered an army and marched on Talakad in order to obtain the jewellery. The sick viceroy fell in action. Saddened and enraged, the Rani went to the river bank, flung the piece of jewellery far into the river, and drowned herself opposite to Malingi (a large town on the other bank of Kaveri, one of the seven of which Talakad was composed after the 12th century) with the following curse on her lips.

"Let Talakad become sand,
Let Malingi become a whirlpool, and
Let the Mysore Rulers beget no heirs."

A woman's curse is potent, and the sands crept on the city; and where the old town of Malingi stood, there is seen now only the eddying waters of Kaveri. Fortunately the last portion of the curse has proved ineffectual.

Somanathpur :

SOMANATHA, an officer under the Hoysala king Narasimha III (1254—1291 A.D.) established this village giving it his name. It is about 30 miles from Mysore, the road passing through Thirumakudlu-Narasipur, a little town at the charming spot where the rivers Kaveri and Kapini meet. Somanathpur is a very insignificant village today, but it presents to us a work of art which offers us a moment's escape into an ancient day as do the temples at Belur and Halebid. Of this temple Lewis Rice says: "This elaborately carved structure is attributed to Jakanachari, the famous sculptor and architect of the Hoysala kings, under whom Hindu art in Mysore reached

its culmination. Though not on the scale of the unfinished temple at Halebid, the general effect is more pleasing, from the completion of the superstructure, consisting of three pyramidal towers or *vimana* surmounting the triple shrine; . . . . . . Round the exterior base are portrayed consecutively, with considerable spirit, the leading incidents in the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and *Bhagavata*, carved in potstone, the termination of each chapter and section being indicated respectively by a closed or half-closed door. The number of separate sculptured images erected upon and around the basement, whose mutilated remains are shown around, was no less than 74."

Sivasamudram:

HERE the Kaveri divides into two branches, forming the island of Sivasamudram, and descends into the plains of Madras in two falls, Gagana Chukki and Bara Chukki. Gagana Chukki is on the western branch of the river, forming the boundary between Mysore and Coimbatore. It is about two miles from the Travellers' Bungalow. Here the river hurls down the precipice about two hundred feet, roaring, foaming, and

spraying, into a deep pool below. The eastern branch, Bara Chukki, during the rainy season, falls over the hill-side in a continuous sheet, nearly a mile broad; and this, set in a forest land, provides a sight which for sheer beauty and magnificence is excelled only by Jog Falls.

This island town was founded in the 16th century by one Ganga Raja. There was a serious omission in the inauguration rites, and the line was doomed to extinction after the third generation. Ganga Raja's reign was prosperous and long. After him came his son Nandi Raja, whose mind was obsessed with the doom that hung over the family. One day he called up his wife to go with him and see Gagana Chukki, which was in floods. As they rode up the steep rock, the queen's heart beat fast and she asked why he was riding so recklessly. He didn't hear her. His mind was fixed on the atonement he was going to make for the omission at the inauguration. He urged the horse on. The cliff over which the river leapt swung on view; now it neared; the roaring of Gagana Chukki drowned all the terrified questioning and pleading of his wife crouching beside him on the horse;

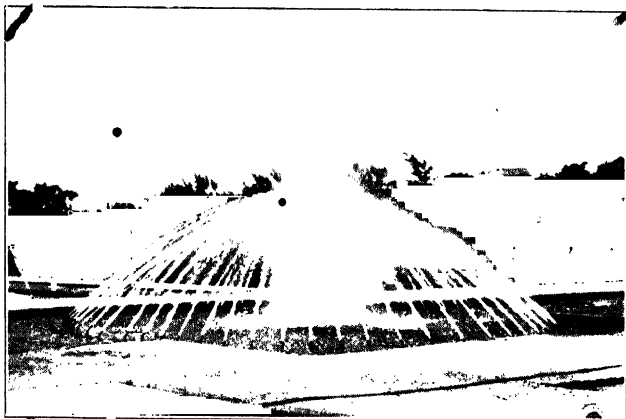
they approached the edge, galloped over, and plunged headlong with the cataract. Ganga Raja II who succeeded him had a prosperous and quiet reign. He had two daughters whom he gave in marriage to two chieftains in the neighbourhood. This alliance deprived the chieftains of all tranquillity and happiness, for, their wives constantly nagged them, contrasting their husband's conditions with the splendour and the power of their father. Incensed by this they combined and evolved a plan to humble their wives and prove their own superiority. They assembled their forces and besieged Sivasamudram. The siege lasted twelve years; and yet they were not able to enter the island. In the end they corrupted the minister of Ganga Raja, and he sent away the guards at the ford on some prolonged errand. The enemy poured into the place while Ganga Raja's attention was concentrated on a game of chess with his minister. The excited shouting and noise made by the soldiers reached the king's ears at last and he rose to his feet. The minister explained that it was the noise of children at play, and requested him to sit down and continue the game.

But the king kicked away the chess pieces, drew his sword and killed all the women and children in the palace; he then rushed forward to meet the invaders and was killed fighting. The sons-in-law who had not bargained for this holocaust but only wanted to prove their worth to their wives, were horrified at the turn of events. They jumped on their horses and galloped at full speed towards Gagana Chukki and went over; which example was immediately followed by their wives, whose inordinate pride in their parent had been responsible for the working out of the curse on the family.

The dashing cataract presented itself as a means of picturesque suicide to old kings, but to a modern mind it appealed as a thing that could be usefully employed. One Edmund Carrington, an electrical engineer, applied in 1894 for permission to utilize the energy of the falls. And today Sivasamudram is one of the most famous electricity generating stations in India. Other hydro-electric schemes may be more modern and more distinguished in one way or another, but this Sivasamudram Station has to its credit: it is one of the earliest power

houses in the country and has a definite place of honour in the history of hydro-electric development in India. "It is just about a century since Michael Faraday made his fundamental discoveries in electro-magnetism on which the whole modern practice of electrical generation is based, but it was not until Thomas Edison invented the incandescent lamp about 1890 that electric lighting became universally possible. About the time Edison invented the incan descent lamp, a commercial type of motor was developed. These inventions and developments immediately made extremely flexible the production, distribution and use of electrical energy for all classes of lighting and for motive power purposes.

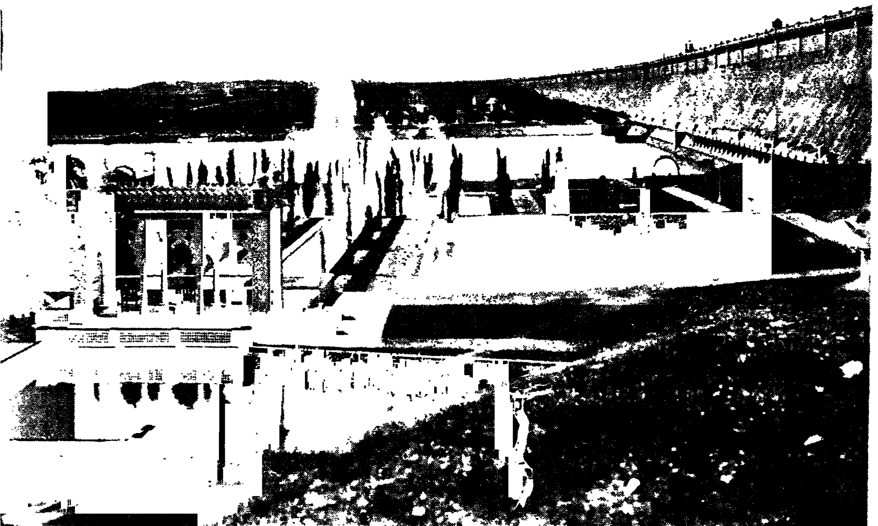
"It did not take the Mysore Government very long after these investigations and developments to appreciate the value of hydro-electric power and to start an investigation of her resources. The survey of the hydro-power resources of the Mysore State actually began in 1898, about ten years after the invention of the incandescent lamp and the development of an economical motor."—*Mr. S. G. Forbes.*



BRINDAVAN—ONE OF THE FOUNTAINS.



A QUIET RETREAT



ONE OF THE MANY DELIGHTFUL SPOTS IN THE BRINDAVAN GARDENS.

Melkote :

A SACRED place about 30 miles from Mysore, built on the rocky hills, Yadugiri, overlooking the Kaveri valley. Here the great teacher, Ramanujacharya, took shelter from his persecutors and stayed for about fourteen years. Ramanuja was born at Sri Perambatur, studied at Conjeevaram, and retired to Srirangam, which is at the parting of the rivers Kaveri and Coleroon. In that seclusion he evolved his system of philosophy and wrote his great works. He then travelled far and wide spreading his doctrine and establishing several *maths*, with the chief one at Ahobila. This wide preaching and conversion brought him in conflict with the Chola king who was a staunch *Saiva*. The king proclaimed that all the Brahmins in his dominion should declare their faith in Siva, and those who could not do this were persecuted. At this, Ramanuja fled from the Tamil province.

Bittiga, the Hoysala king, came under the influence of this teacher and was converted to Vaishnavism and assumed the name "Vishnuvardhana." There are numerous legends connected with this conversion. One of them is that his daughter who was

possessed was cured by Ramanuja while the Jains could not do anything. Another legend is that the king's wife who was a *Vaishnavite* pointed out to him that the Jains would not accept food at his hands because he had married her. The king put it to test, and his invitations were repulsed. Resenting this the king went over to the other side and left the Jains to be persecuted by Ramanuja. All this sounds a little too sensational and dramatic. The simple fact seems to be that having come in contact with a strong personality, the king could not help imbibing his philosophy, doctrine, and outlook.

The principal temple at Melkote is the one dedicated to Sri Krishna, under the name of *Chella Pillai*, meaning "darling son." Buchanan, in his journal, has an explanation for it. When Ramanuja went to the shrine to perform puja, he found the idol missing and was told that it had been carried away by the 'turc' king of Delhi. Ramanuja went to Delhi and found that the king had given it to his daughter for her to play with. The girl had fallen deeply in love with this handsome image and would not easily part

with it. But the power of a *mantra* uttered by Ramanuja brought the image into his hands. He clasped it close to his body, calling it "Chella Pillai" and returned to Melkote. The broken-hearted princess mounted a horse and followed him as fast as she could. When she was about to reach out her hand for the idol she disappeared and was never seen again. A monument was built for the princess at the foot of the hill.

On the summit of the hill is the Narasimha temple, richly endowed, and possessing a very valuable collection of jewels. In 1614 Raja Wadeyar made over to the temple a large estate he received from the Vijayanagar king, Venkatapathi Raya. Even Tipu Sultan granted some elephants for the temple. The chief annual celebration is the *Vairamudi* festival, which is attended by tens and thousands of people. This is a celebration of the recovery of the diamond crown of Vishnu which was stolen by a serpent and carried off to a distant world underground; Vishnu's great devotee and vehicle, Garuda, the devine eagle, destroyed the demon snake and retrieved the diamond crown.

Brindavan :

TWELVE miles from Mysore. A place where the engineer in addition to the necessary business of opening and shutting sluice gates has created a dream world with the medium at his disposal—water and electricity. This dam across the Kaveri impounds a tremendous quantity of water on one side, which assures a steady supply for the hydro-electric works at Sivasamudram and irrigates 1,25,000 acres of land situated in Mandya, Malavalli, and Maddur taluks. This is strictly business, engineer's business. But on the other side of the dam the engineer has trespassed into the field of the artist. There is a garden laid out, below the dam, over 20 acres of ground, in terraces flanked by lawns and flower beds. A broad sheet of water drops down a height of twenty feet, below an illuminated pavilion, flows through a channel, dances through the jets of innumerable fountains, lit up all the way by coloured lights, and rejoins the river, from the middle of which a column of water shoots up a height of a hundred feet. This is a rare world of dream and poetry, created with colour, light, and water.

THE END